A CHOICE

COLLECTION

OF VERY VALUABLE

Prefaces, Lectures, and Sermons,

PREACHED

Upon the MOUNTAINS and MUIRS of *SCOTLAND*,
In the hotteſt Time of the late PERSECUTION.

By that faithful Miniſter and Martyr of Jeſus Chriſt,
The REVEREND MR. JAMES RENWICK.

Carefully collected, and faithfully tranſcribed from ſeveral Manuſcripts; and now publiſhed at the earneſt deſire of the Owners of that Cauſe, which the famous AUTHOR ſealed with his Blood.

MARK i. 3. *The Voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his Paths ſtraight.*

THE FOURTH EDITION.

To which are added,

The Form and Order of the Admiſſion of ruling Elders; a Reply to Mr Langlan's Letter to Gavin Wotherſpoon; and a Teſtimony to the truths of God and to his cauſe, as it is ſtated by the true Preſbyterians of the Church of Scotland, againſt all its Adverſaries.

By the ſame Author.

GLASGOW:
Printed and ſold by JOHN BRYCE, Bookſeller Salt-market.

M,DCC,LXXVII.



TO THE READER.

CHRISTIAN READER,

AMONG the many wonderful works, which the Lord in the wiſe diſpenſation of his providence, hath brought to paſs and accompliſhed for the children of men, his marvellous loving-kindneſs, and tender mercies, beſtowed upon Scotland, ought with thankfulneſs to be acknowledged, to be among the greateſt that ever he beſtowed upon any one particular nation, ſince he finiſhed the work of man's redemption, and aſcended up on high; in the Father's giving, and the Son's taking this nation (which is one of the utmoſt parts of the earth) for his poſſeſſion, and a part of his inheritance, Pſal. ii. 8. Iſa. xlix. 1.; in converting this nation from groſs heatheniſh idolatry; and making the inhabitants of our land, who were ſitting in darkneſs, and in the region of the ſhadow of death, to ſee great light, Mat. iv. 16.; by viſiting them with the Day-ſtar from on high, with the light of the glorious goſpel, ſhining as in a dark place, until the blackneſs and darkneſs of heathen idolatry vaniſhed out of this land: And thus our land, by their early converſion unto God, was among the firſt fruits of the Gentiles unto him.

AND, after that this nation had, by an univerſal defection, apoſtatized from the purity of the ſimplicity of the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, and fallen into the groſs errors and abominable idolatries of that ſynagogue of Satan, the antichriſtian church of Rome, and was involved into black popery, the Lord ſhewed again the power of his works, by ſetting to his hand, the ſecond time to redeem and deliver his people in this land, from under the tyranny, and uſurped power, of the man of ſin, that Roman antichriſt, Pſal. cxii. 6. Iſa. xi. 11. by raiſing up fit inſtruments, to ſhake off the heavy yoke of popery, renounce and abjure the popiſh errors and idolatries, and to carry on a glorious work of reformation; which, notwithſtanding of all the oppoſition that it met with from the popiſh, prelatic, and malignant factions, yet at laſt arrived to the greateſt degree of reformation, that ever was eſtabliſhed in any one nation ſince the

apoſtles days; which was accompanied with a great meaſure of the power and preſence of the Lord, and a ſpirit of converſion going along with the preached goſpel; whereby many were turned from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, Acts xxvi. 18. For then the Lord made his people willing by a day of his power, and conſtrained his enemies to feign ſubjection unto him, Pſal. cx. 3. and lxxxi. 15. The goſpel gave a certain ſound: The king of glory rode proſperouſly in ſtate, and was held in the galleries; and, by the arrows of conviction, wounded the hearts of his enemies, till they were brought into ſubjection under him, Pſal. xlv. 4, 5. Cant. vii. 5. And ſo mightily did the Lord work by his power in this land, that the inhabitants thereof were brought to make a ſelf-ſurrender of themſelves, and all that they had, to the Lord, by ſolemn covenant, in a national way; and ſtrictly bound themſelves to all the duties of holineſs, and againſt all things whatſoever that are contrary to ſound doctrine, and the power of godlineſs: At which time the glory of the Lord ſo filled our temple, that Scotland became the holy place, where the moſt high had his abode, Pſal. xlvi. 4. A land, like the land of Judah, where God was well known, where he had his tabernacle, and his ſeat, Pſal. lxxvi. 1. A land, whoſe inhabitants might juſtly have ſaid, He that is our God, is the God of ſalvation, Pſalm lxviii. 20. And a land to whom it might have been ſaid, *Cry out, and ſhout, O thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the holy One of Iſrael in the midſt of thee*, Iſa. xii. 6. A land, which the Lord redeemed for the rod of his inheritance, as a part of his purchaſe, which he poſſeſſed, and where he dwelt, Pſal. lxxiv. 2. A land, for purity of doctrine, worſhip government, and diſcipline, preferable to any one particular nation under the New-Teſtament diſpenſation; of whom it might have been ſaid, as in Deut. iv. 7, 8. *For what nation is there ſo great, who hath God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there ſo great, that hath ſtatutes and judgments ſo righteous as all this law, which I ſet before you this day?* A land, for faithful miniſters, bold confeſſors, valiant, heroic, and faithful martyrs, inferior to no nation in the world. A land, where Chriſt's kingly government and alone headſhip in and over his church, hath been aſſerted, defended, contended for, and ſealed with the blood of a noble cloud of witneſſes, who overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and loved not their lives unto the death, Rev. xii 11. A land, wherein the Lord hath taken as particular poſſeſſion, as ever he took of any nation in the world: For, he hath taken poſ-

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ſeſſion of our houſes, our towns, our cities, our infields, our out-fields, our glens, our cleughs, our braeſides, our moſſes, our muirs, our mountains, and wild receſſes: In all theſe places, the banner of the glorious goſpel hath been faithfully diſplayed; and, by the fruit and increaſe thereof, God hath been glorified, and as numerous multitudes converted, and comforted, by the powerful preſence of God, as hath been at any time ſince the apoſtles days: *For, in this mountain* (even in Scotland) *hath the Lord of hoſts made unto his people a feaſt of fat things, full of marrow, a feaſt of wines on the lees, well refined,* Iſa. xxv. 6. Here his ſtately goings have been ſeen in the ſanctuary, with his footſteps dropping fatneſs, with many viſible ſigns of his ſenſible preſence: The ſhout of a king was heard in the aſſemblies of his ſaints, and young and old were made to rejoice together. So, if all the mercies that the Lord hath beſtowed upon Scotland be duly conſidered, it may juſtly be ſaid, concerning the Lord's great goodneſs to this land, *That he hath not dealt ſo with any nation,* Pſal. cxlvii. 20.

AMONG the many great mercies, that the Lord wrought for us in this land, the raiſing up, and calling to the work of the miniſtry, faithful Mr James Renwick, may juſtly be reckoned one, conſidering the low and lamentable caſe and condition that the Lord's ſuffering remnant was in, before and at that time; for, from July 10th, 1681, that the reverend Mr Donald Cargill preached his laſt public ſermon, till November 23d, 1683, that Mr James Renwick preached his firſt public ſermon, they had this as a bitter ingredient in the cup of their affliction, under all their fiery trials of a hot perſecution, that they were altogether deprived of the public preached goſpel, and all public goſpel ordinances, becauſe there was no faithful miniſter in Scotland, from Mr Donald Cargill's martyrdom, till Mr James Renwick his ſucceſſor in the work of the miniſtry, came home from Holland after his ordination; of him the reader may be pleaſed to take the following brief account.

MR James Renwick was born in the pariſh of Glencairn in Nithiſdale, February 15th, 2662. of Chriſtian parents. When he was about two years of age, he was diſcerned to be aiming at prayer, even in the cradle, and about it: During his childhood, he was not only kept from the ordinary pollutions of children, but even then fell in love with the ways of God, by taking delight in ſecret prayer, reading the word of God, and making conſcience in obeying his parents, and had ſuch exerciſe upon his Spirit, when

when he was about ſix years of age, as brought him under doubts and debates in his mind, concerning theſe things which were the matter of his exerciſe: Afterward, when he came to more maturity, and diſtinctneſs of knowledge, he was aſſaulted with temptations of atheiſm; with which he was much perplexed for a time; but at laſt, out of this temptation the Lord delivered him through his grace, by giving him the ſweet ſerenity of a ſettled perſuaſion, of the being of a God, and of his intereſt in him.

HE learned at the univerſity of Edinburgh; and when the time came, that his courſe at the college drew to an end, he, for refuſing to ſwear the oath of allegiance, was refuſed the privilege of laureation; but afterward he obtained it privately at Edinburgh; where for ſome time he remained proſecuting his ſtudies: He continued in amity and unity with the preſbyterian miniſters there, until they had given ſo many diſcoveries of their many lamentable defections from Scotland's covenanted work of reformation, that he could not with peace of conſcience join with them in public ordinances; and that brought him to a neceſſity, to withdraw his countenance from them.

HE was preſent at and much concerned with, the martyrdom of faithful Mr Donald Cargill, July 27th, 1681. and ſoon after that (having juſtly ſeparated himſelf from all the unfaithful miniſters in this kingdom) he joined with the Lord's faithful perſecuted witneſſes, who at that time had no miniſter to preach the goſpel to them: Not long after he joined with them, they agreed upon emitting that declaration publiſhed at Lanerk, Jan. 12th, 1682 which confirmed their preceeding declaration at Sanquhar, and gave the reaſons of their revolt from the government of the tyrant Charles II. wherein he was ſo far concerned, as to have the honour of being employed in proclaiming the ſame.

THE ſuffering remnant being fully ſatisfied with his piety, zeal and learning, did by the appointment of their general meeting, which met at Edinburgh, October 11th, 1682. ſend him over to Holland in the month of December following: When he went there, he was ſettled at the univerſity of Groningen, where he proſecuted his ſtudies with approven proficiency, until, by the merciful providence of God, he was ordained a miniſter of the goſpel, for the church of Scotland, by the preſbytery of Groningen, May 10th, 1683. without any impoſition or reſtriction, but that

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he ſhould teach according to the word of God, and the Scots confeſſion agreeable therewith; which ordination was accompanied with much of the Lord's preſence.

AFTER his ordination, his fervent zeal, according to knowledge, increaſed in him longing deſires, to lay out the talent that he had received, to the relief and advantage of the poor people in Scotland, who were languiſhing, and like to ſtarve, in a famine of the goſpel: So, after he had for ſome time longed to be home to his native country, he embarked in a veſſel bound for Ireland, which by a violent ſea-ſtorm was compelled to put into the Rye harbour in England; but getting of again, after many toſſings and perils at ſea, he arrived at Dublin in Ireland: While he was in Ireland, he had many conteſts with the unfaithful miniſters there, for their defections, indifferency, and lukewarmneſs in the cauſe of Chriſt; for which he oppoſed and upbraided them to their face.

AFTER he was for ſome time detained in Ireland, he took ſhipping for Scotland; in which paſſage he had conſiderable dangers and difficulties, and a proſpect of more, becauſe he knew not the place where he was to land, nor how to put to ſhore in any place undiſcovered; all ports then being ſo ſtrictly obſerved, to know what paſſengers landed, and the ſkipper refuſing to let him go until his name ſhould be given up: At laſt, when the ſhip came to the coaſts of Scotland, he prevailed with the ſkipper to give him a caſt to ſhore: After he was landed, he had inexpreſſible difficulties to wreſtle with, in wandering through unknown wilderneſſes, among unknown people, before he could meet with any of his friends.

IT was in the month of September that he arrived in Scotland: But though the neceſſity was great, he would not preach the goſpel publicly till he was orderly called thereunto, by theſe who ſent him to Holland for ordination. So, he was orderly called to the work of the miniſtry, by the general meeting of the true preſbyterians, of the perſecuted church of Chriſt in Scotland, which met at Dermead, in the pariſh of Cumbuſnethan, in Clydeſdale, October 3d, 1685.

His firſt public day's preaching was at the ſame place, called Darmead, upon the 23d day of November thereafter, being a day appointed for public humiliation, faſting, and prayer, for their own and the land's ſins: Upon which day,

day, he lifted up the public ſtandard of the goſpel, which fell at the martyrdom of famous, faithful Mr Donald Cargill, and laid open in the ſins of the land, very plainly and particularly.

WHEN he was entred upon the work of the miniſtry, the ſuffering remnant, whoſe miniſter he was, were greatly comforted by his miniſterial ambaſſador becoming practice, "approving himſelf in all things, as the miniſter of "God, in much patience, in afflictions, in neceſſities, in "diſtreſſes, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in faſt-"ings, by pureneſs, by knowledge, by long-ſuffering, by "kindneſs, by the Holy Ghoſt, by love unfeigned, by the "word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of "righteouſneſs, on the right hand, and on the left, by ho-"nour and diſhonour, by evil report and good report; as "a deceiver, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well "known; as dying, and behold living; as chaſtned, and "not killed; as ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, "yet having many rich; as having nothing, and yet poſ-"ſeſſing all things," 2 Cor. vi. 4,—10. And they found to their ſouls ſweet conſolation, that the Lord had given him ſuch knowledge and underſtanding in the great myſteries of religion, true godlineſs, and ſoul-exerciſe, as made him know, from his own experience, how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, to the ſoul that was weary, Iſa. l. 4. And, all the time of his miniſtry, the goſpel preached by him, gave as certain a ſound, concerning the duties, ſins and dangers of the times, as ever it gave in any period of time in this church.

HE travelled, with great pain and diligence, through the moſſes, muirs, and mountains of Scotland; diſplaying the banner of the goſpel faithfully, in the dark, cold, ſtormy nights, as well as in the day-time, as a workman that had no cauſe to be aſhamed; breaking the bread of life to his hearers, and declaring the whole counſel of God to them, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon, Acts xx. 27. 2 Tim. iv, 2. When, oftentimes, he had no better place of retirement, to conſult his Maſter's mind, concerning what he was to ſpeak to his people, than a cold glen, cleugh, den, or cave of the earth: And thus he, "of whom the world was not "worthy, wandred in deſerts, and in mountains, and in "dens and caves of the earth," Heb. xi. 38. without any certain place where to lay his head, Matth. viii. 20. And that for the true and unfeigned love which he had to Chriſt, his cauſe, intereſt, and perſecuted people; hotly purſued and perſecuted by open enemies, and grievouſly reproached

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by many falſe lies, and ſlanderous calumnies, vented and ſpread againſt him, by falſe brethren, backſlidden profeſſors, and ſuch as ran into right hand extremes, who deſerted the Lord's cauſe themſelves, and therefore hated him, becauſe their own works were evil, and his righteous, 1 John iii. 12. Under all which perſecutions and reproaches, he gave many convincing evidences that he was one of theſe, who eſteemed the reproach of Chriſt greater riches than all the treaſures in the world, Heb. xi. 26. And, under all his perſecutions and reproaches, he was ſo countenanced of the Lord, that the more he was afflicted this way, the more he, and the work of the Lord in his hand, grew, Exod. i. 12. For, though the archers ſorely grieved him, and ſhot at him, and hated him, yet his bow abode in ſtrength, and the arms of his hands were made ſtrong, by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 23, 24 For, under all his trials and temptations, both before and during the time of his impriſonment, the Lord made him to remain immoveable in his cauſe, Pſal. lv. 22. And gave him grace, not only to believe in his name, but to ſuffer patiently for his ſake, Phil i. 19. till, at laſt, he honoured him to ſeal all theſe truths, which he contended earneſtly for, and taught to others, with his blood, by martyrdom, at the Graſs-market of Edinburgh, February 17, 1688. being then twenty ſix years and two days old: And, as he was lovely and pleaſant in his life, ſo he obtained ſuch a good report at his death, as will make his memory ſweet and ſavoury to the generation of the righteous, while ſun and moon endure.

As for the following prefaces, lectures, and ſermons, they are, in the matter, ſound and ſolid, plain, and eaſy to be underſtood; not in the inticing words of man's wiſdom, but in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and of power, 1 Cor. ii. 4. Not gleaned and gathered from other mens labours, but ſpoken from the word of God, as the Spirit of God gave him utterance, Acts ii. 4 free, and faithfully applied, to the duties, and againſt the ſins of the time they were preached in: And notwithſtanding of all the ſtraitning circumſtances that he was under, they are, as to their manner and method regular and orderly, above what could be expected from any, in the caſe that he was in: And though he was but young in years, yet he ſpeaks as one of old and ancient experience, in the great myſteries of godlineſs.

So far as we underſtand, theſe ſermons, *&c.* were written by ſome of his hearers, when they were preached, and afterward

terward tranſcribed and diſperſed among others: And it is certainly a great diſadvantage, in their publication, that they were neither written nor reviſed with his own hand; which, if providence had ſo ordered, they would now have appeared with a far greater luſtre, than can be expected of a poſthumous work, ſo long after the author's death.

WE could heartily have wiſhed, that ſome perſon of better abilities, for ſuch an undertaking, than any amongſt us are, had reviſed and prepared this worthy author's labours for the preſs; which is a work ſo honourable, that it is no ways below the ableſt ſcribe in the kingdom.

AS for what we have done in publiſhing them, it proceeded merely from a call of neceſſity; for, conſidering that it is above ſixty years, ſince the laſt of theſe ſermons were preached, and no learned man (ſo far as we know) hath ever eſſayed to collect, reviſe, and publiſh them to the world; and that the written copies that are ſcattered here and there, in peoples hands, are written in the old hand, not now in uſe, and many of them ſo worn, dim, and ſullied, that, if care had not been taken to prevent it, by their publication, they would, for the moſt part, in a ſhort time, have been extinct, and of no uſe to poſterity: The conſideration of theſe things moved us, to make all the diligence that we could, to collect, tranſcribe, prepare, and put them to the preſs, that thereby they may be both uſeful to the Lord's people of this preſent age, and alſo preſerved for the good of poſterity: And, if thereby God be glorified, and his people edified, ſtrengthened, and comforted, we have all our deſire in what we have done: And if any, through prejudice, ſhall be ſo cruel and uncharitable, as to condemn us for this piece of our generation-work, becauſe we are but prie perſons who have done it, we are reſolved to bear what reproach they are pleaſed to caſt upon us for it, patiently, and to commit ourſelves in this to him that judgeth righteouſly, 1 Pet. ii. 23.

AS for the preciſe time, wherein theſe ſermons were preached, the moſt part of them having no date, it could not be known; yet we have been as careful as we could, to place them in order, according to the time wherein they were preached, as near as we could underſtand it.

SINCE the ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he in a ſpecial manner revealeth his ſecrets to his ſervants the prophets, Pſalm xxv. 14. Amos iii. 7. None need

need doubt of the accompliſhment of what this faithful ambaſſador of Jeſus Chriſt hath ſpoken in the name of the Lord, in ſeveral of the following prefaces and ſermons, concerning the ſore and heavy judgments and calamities, that the Lord is to bring upon the malignant enemies of his cauſe, intereſt and people, in theſe covenanted nations, and his glorious return to theſe nations, with the down-pouring of his Spirit from on high, with the purity and power of goſpel ordinances with a purer goſpel reformation, and miniſters more faithful than ever yet have been, to revive true religion and godlineſs, to eſtabliſh truth and righteouſneſs in the earth, and to heal the lamentable breaches that are amongſt his people, becauſe theſe things are not yet accompliſhed: For, ſince the Lord honoured him to believe in his name, to be faithful in his generation, to ſuffer for his cauſe, and to ſeal his teſtimony with his blood, we are fully perſuaded, that he will not ſuffer any of his words to fall to the ground, 1 Sam. iii. 19. Though he reſerveth the ſet time and ſeaſon of their accompliſhment to himſelf, as not ſeeing it for his glory to reveal it to any, Acts i. 7. And though the delay ſeem long, to ſuch as have long looked for, and earneſtly deſired Zion's deliverence; yet it is but a ſhort time with the Lord, with whom a thouſand years are as one day, 2 Pet. iii. 8.

AND, beſides this, he is a God of ſuch long ſparing mercy, that, in the ordinary way of his procedure, in bringing temporal judgments upon his enemies, he doth not puniſh them till their iniquity be full, nor thruſt in the ſickle of his wrath into their field, till the harveſt of their wickedneſs be fully ripe; neither doth he deliver Zion, till the ſet time be come, Gen. xv. 16. Rev. xiv. 15. Pſal. cii. 13. But, if once the iniquity of his enemies were full, their harveſt ripe, and the ſet time of Zion's deliverance come, then the Lord will bring his threatned judgments upon his enemies, and make the glory of our ſecond temple to exceed the glory of the firſt, for purity of laws and ordinances, faithfulneſs of miniſters, and manifeſtations of the Lord's preſence among his people: And, when this comes to paſs, then Scotland ſhall know that they had a faithful prophet (who had the mind of the Lord, in what he ſpake in his name) among them, when they had faithful Mr James Renwick, declaring his Maſter's mind, upon the high places of the fields in Scotland.

THAT the Lord in mercy may haſten the fall of Antichriſt, the man of ſin, and all the ſupporters and upholders of the kingdom of Satan, the revival of the decayed power

of godlineſs, and buried work of covenanted reformation, the pouring forth of the Spirit of grace and ſupplication, upon the hearts and ſouls of all his children, the healing of all the breaches that are among the godly, in this ſad time of diviſion and confuſion, his return to this, and the other two covenanted nations, with the purity, converting and comforting power of goſpel ordinances, the eſtabliſhment of truth and righteouſneſs in the earth, the accompliſhment of all things which he hath promiſed in his word, concerning the advancement of the kingdom of grace, and the coming of the kingdom of glory, and, that the following ſermons, through his bleſſing, may be inſtrumental to convince and convert ſinners, reclaim backſliders, ſtrengthen, comfort, and build up believers in holineſs, and the fear of the Lord, is the earneſt and hearty deſire of the

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PREFACES, LECTURES AND SERMONS.

A FAST-DAY's PREFACE.

YOU know, my friends, that this meeting was appointed to have been at another place and occaſion, but was diſappointed: What the language of this diſappointment may be to us, you would ſeriouſly conſider. I ſhall tell you, we think the Lord would have us to learn theſe three things by it.

1. He would have us to take a back-look of, and make a more narrow ſearch into, and take ſerious thoughts of our own ſins and iniquities which have provoked him to remove the goſpel and goſpel-ordinances from us.

2. He would have us highly to eſteem goſpel-ordinances, and not to look upon them as common mercies and privileges. But yet,

3. He would have us not ſo to eſteem of them as to put them in his room (which, alas! we have done), but to ſeek the living God in them. And ſeeing in his providence, he hath tryſted us together this day, it may be aſked, What is our errand here? We ſhall tell you this in theſe three things.

(1.) To ſet about the great duty of faſting, mourning, and humiliation before the Lord; even to mourn over the ſeveral ſteps of our defections; and in order to this, we ſhall deſcend, or go down to where we firſt left the Lord and declined, which hath provoked him to leave us.——

(2.) Our ſecond errand here this day, is to offer you reconciliation; to tell you this, that God whom you have offended, by theſe ſins and ſteps of defection and backſlidings, is content to be reconciled to you: O therefore *turn you, turn you unto me, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and I will turn unto you, ſaith the Lord of hoſts!*

(3.) Our third errand here this day, is to lift up, and raiſe the fallen ſtandard of the goſpel that did fall in this our land

land, when that valiant chariot-man, Mr Donald Cargill, fell; yea, that very part of the ſtandard which he held; yet let not any captious creature (if there be any ſuch here) think or ſay, that we are following the examples of men: No, no; for we deſire only to follow them, in ſo far as they followed the Lord.

N. B. In this preface, there is a very faithful enumeration of the land's public ſins and defections, which is deſignedly omitted here, becauſe the ſame public ſins and defections, with ſome additions, fall in afterwards in another faſt-day's work: And ſince it is unneceſſary to print the ſame things twice in one book, it is ſurely beſt to print that enumeration of public ſins which is largeſt.

LECTURE I.

ISAIAH xl. 1,——8.

1. *Comfort ye, comfort my people, ſaith your God.*
2. *Speak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned; for ſhe hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her ſins.*
3. *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderneſs, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make ſtraight in the deſert a high way for our God.*
4. *Every valley ſhall be exalted, and every mountain and hill ſhall be made low; and the crooked ſhall be made ſtraight, and the rough places plain:*
5. *And the glory of the Lord ſhall be revealed, and all fleſh ſhall ſee it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.*
6. *The voice ſaid, Cry. And he ſaid, What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field.*
7. *The graſs withereth the flower fadeth; becauſe the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: Surely the people is graſs.*
8. *The graſs withereth, the flower fadeth. but the word of our God ſhall ſtand for ever.*

THE Pſalmiſt ſays, Pſal. xxx. 5. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* So a night of affliction and darkneſs hath, and ever will have, morning of light and deliverance. And in this portion of ſcripture, we have, (1.) A prophecy of the children of Iſrael, their

their returning out of their captivity temporal, and that by the way of a type of their being delivered out of their ſpiritual captivity by the Meſſias. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people; and ſay that her warfare is accompliſhed*, &c. ver. 1, 2. (2.) A prophecy of John the Baptiſt his being ſent before Chriſt's coming in the fleſh, to prepare the way before him, ver. 3, 4, 5. (3.) Iſaiah's commiſſion at this time, to proclaim all fleſh to be graſs: From the tranſient fading whereof he concludes the ſtability of the word of God, ver. 6, 7, 8.

1. As to the firſt, *viz.* the prophecy of their return, *&c.* and the prophet's telling them, that their warfare is accompliſhed under the law. Obſerve, (1.) That it is comfort indeed which cometh from the Lord; and when he ſpeaks it will be comfort indeed. (2.) When the Lord allows comfort, he will not have it to be hid, *Cry unto her*, &c. (3.) That his conſolation is ſure and true, and ought to be believed; therefore he repeats it twice, *Comfort ye, comfort ye*, (4.) That his conſolation is ſuch, as carries ſo much mercy in it, as cannot be taken up at one time. (5.) That whatever favour or refreſhing the Lord gives, it comes all thro' the channel of his mercy, and the pardon of his peoples tranſgreſſions. Therefore, would you have him to put an end to your warfare, and to bring his enemies down? ſeek the pardon of your iniquity, *&c. Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith the Lord:* Therefore he doubles it, that a ſecond ſight may be taken of it, that it is he that comforts his people, and that with the tidings of mercy; and the tidings of accompliſhing their warfare, and with the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs; which belongs to the

2. Diviſion of the words, *viz.* That before Chriſt was to come in the fleſh, he would ſend his harbinger and forerunner, John the Baptiſt, to prepare his way before him, by preaching the neceſſity of repentance: So now the Lord is on his way in coming to Scotland, to ſit as a refinner's fire, to conſume and purge away the droſs: He is therefore deſiring preparation of you, and deſiring you to repent, *for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* O then? what ſay you to it? will you yet put forth your hand to hold glorious Chriſt away? O look to him whom ye have pierced and mourn! Look to that prince of delight, whom ye have made (with a very ſore heart) to forſake his habitation. Return unto him, for he is ſeeking to be reconciled to you again, and he hath ſent his goſpel among you, to prepare you for his return; and when he comes he will utterly deſtroy enemies and backſliders: To clear this to you, conſider Malachi's prophecy of John, Mal. iv. 5, 6. "Behold I will ſend you "Elijah the prophet, before the coming of the great and "dreadful

" dreadful day of the Lord; and he ſhall turn the hearts of " the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children " to their fathers, leſt I come and ſmite the earth with a " curſe." So then, " O beloved, if there be any conſolati- " on in Chriſt, if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of " the Spirit, if any bowels of mercy, in the name of *lovely* " Chriſt, we beſeech you to *yield, and ſtand no longer out.*" O let his goſpel and meſſage have this effect upon you, as to turn to your Father! If any of you turn unto him, he will turn unto you; for now he is ſeeking preparation for his returning: *Make ſtraight a high-way for our Lord.* But to go on; we have here the effect of John Baptiſts preaching, but more eſpecially the effect of Chriſt's coming, that is every way to be exalted. Hence obſerve, (1.) When Chriſt returns unto you (for which he is now ſeeking preparation by his meſſage) he will make all odds even. Your poor afflicted waiting ſouls ſhall be exalted, and the mountains ſhall be made low, Zech. iv. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain! before Zerubbabel? thou ſhalt become a plain.* The Perſian dominion, and the Samaritan faction ſhall become a plain. He will bring malignants low. Next obſerve, His coming ſhall be conſpicuous, his glory ſhall be exalted. O his coming to Scotland! O his coming to Scotland will be a conſpicuous coming; for he will come with fire to burn and purge. We have,

3. And laſtly, The prophet's particular commiſſion at that time to cry; *what ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs:* Cry generally, *All fleſh is graſs:* Cry particularly, *All fleſh is graſs.* Hence obſerve, (1.) Miniſters ought not only to be commanded to ſay before they ſpeak, but alſo they ſhould be commanded what to ſay when they ſpeak. (2.) Obſerve, That when the Lord promiſes to come to his people, he will not have them to doubt of it, by reaſon of difficulty or improbability. *All fleſh is graſs:* As if he ſhould ſay, What fear ye? will the multitude of men keep me away? No, no: They are all graſs. Iſa. ii. 11. *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.* But, (3.) Obſerve, That the Lord in coming to his people, and delivering them, will have no one's hand to be ſeen in it but his own; *all fleſh is graſs.* And now from this, the prophet draws a concluſion, and oppoſes the ſtability of the word of God, to the fading of graſs, *&c.* So, O ye his people! this is it, he bids us cry to you, *All fleſh is graſs:* He is ſaying, I give you now an invitation to turn unto him, and gives you a promiſe from heaven, that he will turn

turn unto you; which is more ſure than the heavens: Therefore anſwer, ſays he, the end of this my meſſage, and I ſhall let you ſee all fleſh to be but graſs; I ſhall let you ſee theſe malignant powers to be but graſs, and theſe treacherous miniſters whoſe tongues and doings are againſt me, to be but graſs alſo.

SERMON I.

ISAIAH xxvi. 20.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee: Hide thyſelf, as it were for a little moment until the indignation be over paſt.

THE bowels of the Lord's ſympathy toward his people are always at the burſting out, and he cannot ſee them forſaking their own mercy, and ſtraying from him, but is much taken up in lamenting over their folly, and with giving them many a moving and ſweet invitation to come to him, where their happineſs lies; and lays himſelf open to them, and the riches that are with him, with his arms ſpread abroad, inviting them by his precious and hearty promiſes, ſeeking nothing of folk, but only that they would come and receive freely, Iſa. lv. 1. "Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to "the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and "eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and "without price." He opens up precious and rich ware, and ſays to his buyers and merchants, The commodity is good, come away, we ſhall not caſt out about the price: If ye have hearts to receive, I have an heart to give: Come away then, hearty good fellows, we will never ſtand upon it; for it is not with him as with the men of the world; for they count them the beſt good-fellows who give moſt and freelieſt; but he counts them the beſt good fellows who will take moſt and freelieſt: And he debars none from him, but diſcovers his riches and invites all, Rev. xxii. 16, 17. "I am the root and "the offſpring of David, and the bright and morning ſtar. "And the Spirit, and the Bride ſay, Come: And let him "that heareth ſay, Come: And let him that is athirſt, Come: "And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely" And if this and ſuch ſweet invitations will not prevail, he makes taws to whip his own to himſelf. Terrors within and

judgments without: And he never lays on a blow but he is ſtill provoked to it; and when he lays it on, the tears are in his eyes becauſe he muſt do it, Lam. iii. 33 "For he doth "not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men:" Yea, when his own turn their backs upon him, he lets them not alone, but is ſtill calling them back again, Zech. i. 3 "Turn "ye unto me, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and I will turn unto "you, ſaith the Lord of hoſts." And alſo, when he threatens moſt ſadly, he fails not to make large promiſes to the faithful, and to give them ample invitations to come to him for their pleaſure, and for their ſafety, *Come my people*, &c. When the Lord is coming out of his place, to ſit in judgment upon the inhabitants of the earth, and to give out ſentence upon them according to their doings, and to puniſh them for their iniquities, he calls in his own people to himſelf, where they are to be hid and preſerved. O ſtand ſtill amazed! and wonder at his tender love and fatherly care of his children, who will not come with his cloak of zeal and cloths of vengeance, to give out, and execute his ſentence of juſtice upon his enemies. until that he give his people fair warning thereof, and alſo invites them into their ſhelter and ſafety which he hath prepared for them. You know, Ezek. ix. 2. the Lord ſends forth, firſt, "a man clothed in linen, with a writer's "ink-horn by his ſide, to ſet a mark upon the fore-heads of "them that ſigh and cry for all the abominations that be done "in the earth," and commands his men, with the ſlaughtering weapon in their hands, to go after, "and ſmite, and not "to ſpare nor pity, but to ſlay utterly old and young, both "maids and little children, and women; but not to come "near theſe upon whom the mark is ſet."

Now the Lord hath men prepared, with ſlaughtering weapons in their hands, to kill a ſacrifice at Bozrah, in the land Idumea in Scotland, of prelates and malignants, and of backſlidden miniſters and profeſſors: He is coming to be avenged on that curſed throne, and the ſupporters thereof, for their cruelty done againſt him, and of miniſters and profeſſors for their heinous treachery towards him: And this is his commiſſion, and our charge unto you, to invite and to call you, and all that will give ear unto this rock of ages for your ſhelter, to come unto the chambers of his preſence and protection, where ye ſhall be ſaved with delight. *O come my people!* In which words ye have,

I. An invitation, *Come.*

II. The perſons invited, or the determination thereof, *My people.*

III. That which they are invited unto, the chambers of the Lord's protection and preſence, whereinto he invites them to enter.

IV.

IV. Their carriage, and that which they are to do there, *Shut thy doors about thee, and hide thyſelf, as it were, for a little moment.*

V. The ſafety of theſe chambers, being an hiding-place, *Until the indignation be over-paſt;* or rather the determination of the continuance of their hiding, *Until the indignation be over paſt.*

I. As to the *firſt*, The invitation, *Come; O come!* a homely word indeed: This is no leſs than *behold me! behold me!* Here is enough to give, and here is willingneſs to give, only come, only receive, only take, and ye ſhall not want.

But to enlarge a little, we lay down a twofold doctrine.

Doct I. *There is both ability and willingneſs in the Lord to give you whatſoever your neceſſity requires.*

Ability. What would you have, ſalvation and deliverance? then *he is able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come unto him*, Heb. vii. 25. Lift up your eyes and behold a wonder which ye cannot behold, behold a wonder which ye cannot know, and put forth this queſtion, Iſa. lxiii. 1. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength?* And his anſwer will be unto you, It is *I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, mighty to ſave.* Gainſay it who will, *the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand: He ſhall ſee the travail of his ſoul and be ſatisfied.*

And now, methinks I hear ſome of you ſaying. All that is true, we can ſet to our ſeals to it; but, O! is he willing? there is our queſtion. Willing indeed: He is not more able than he is willing. What are all his promiſes but declarations of his free willingneſs? What are all his ſweet invitations but to tell you that he is willing and ye are welcome? *He that thirſteth let him come, and whoſoever will let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* Ah! what ſay ye to it! Give us your ſeal to his willingneſs alſo. Go, ſay you, why not? ye have it. Then come away, there is no more wanting, ſay, come; we know he is willing, and we ſet to our ſeal to his willingneſs. But is he willing to receive me? Satisfy me in that, and then I will be right. Ah cheat! ye are taking your word back again now, and lifting off your ſeal: If ye except not yourſelf, he will not except you: His invitation is unto all, *every one come, he that thirſteth, come; he that hath no money, come*, Iſa. lv. 1. Now, why will ye be ſo ill to yourſelves, as to debar yourſelves? for he doth not do it; ye may as well, and as rationally ſay, that ye are not a body, as to ſay he debars you. His invitation is to every one. Now, aſſent to this, and then, before you except yourſelf out of this invitation, you muſt firſt ſay you have not a being, neither of ſoul nor body. We ſay, for you to think that he excepts

you, it is all one as to deny yourſelf to be one of the children of Adam. Now, O come, come niggard! what aileth thee? Come, what would ye have that is not in Chriſt? O that ſweet invitation, come! we cannot tell you what is in it; there is a depth in it that all the angels in heaven cannot fathom: It is no leſs than Jeſus Chriſt, *who was delivered for our offences, and was raiſed for our juſtification*, ſpreading forth his arms and inviting you; he is opening up himſelf, his all-ſufficiency and ſuper-tranſcendent excellency, and calling to all poor needy things, come, here is enough for you; give in your deſires, and you ſhall have them ſatisfied to the full. What then have ye to ſay to the bargain? Come, come, it is a rich commodity, and there is no ſticking at the price, only receive and have; the eaſieſt of all terms: There is no more required at your hands. But, ſay ye, ha ſir, ye go without your bounds, the invitation in your text is to his people only, ye are then all wrong: We are not ſo far wrong as ye trow, for the invitation is to his people, to *enter into their chambers*, and all who will come and become his people, to *enter into their chambers*, and ſo this is a free market. We muſt invite all to come, ye who are enemies lay down your arms againſt him and come: Ye who are upholding his enemies, and complying with them in their ſinful courſes and abominatioos, by paying them ceſs and locality, and by furniſhing them meat and drink, (which is more than *a bidding them God ſpeed*, which the Holy Ghoſt, by the mouth of John, forbids, ſecond epiſtle of John, 10th verſe) quit the putting the ſword in God's enemies hands and come: Ye who have given bonds to the adverſary, break your covenant with hell and death, and come: Break your ſworn allegiance to the devil, and come and ſwear a new allegiance to Jeſus Chriſt, and ye ſhall never rue it: Ye who compear before their courts, and pay them fines, whereby both ye acknowledge them who are robbers of God, and call your duty your ſin; quit theſe courſes and come: Ye who go to the curates, leave theſe perjured blind guides and come: Ye who go to the indulged, leave theſe triators to God: Ye who go to the backſlidden ſilent miniſters, leave theſe betrayers of the cauſe, and diſerters of the croſs of Chriſt, and come: Leave all theſe and follow him, he is a true guide, and will be ſo unto you: Ye who any ways ſeek or take the enemy's protection, leave that and come; come to him and ye ſhall find chambers indeed both for ſafety and delight: All ye that are ſtrangers to him come; ye that are in nature come, and ye that know him come. We muſt preach that word, *come*, unto you ſo long as ye are here, until ye be tranſplanted out of this ſpiritual warfare unto celeſtial triumph. O Sirs! come, come, aſk what ye will and he ſhall give it! O come, come!

Now

Now, it were requiſite here to ſhew to you, who it is that comes to Chriſt, and who it is that comes not; but it will come as fitly in the *ſecond* thing which we have noticed in the words, and ſo we proceed to it. The

II. Thing, ye know, was this, The perſons invited, or the determination of the invitation, *my people:* Theſe are they whom he invites to their chambers; his people, they who ſubſcribe to the terms of his covenant, which is, *I will be your God, and ye ſhall be my people;* they who make a covenant with him by ſacrifice, they who covenant with him only to be accepted through the ſacrifice of his Son, and who ſacrifice themſelves by covenant away unto him; they who eſpouſe him to be their God, and his quarrel and concernment to be theirs. But before we enter upon what we propoſed, we proceed to the *third* thing in the words, to make way for it, and ſo ſhall return. The

III. Thing was this, Theſe chambers whereunto they are invited to enter; that is, the chambers of the Lord's protection and preſence. What are theſe chambers do ye think? Aſk at Solomon, and he will tell you, Prov. xviii. 10. *The name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, the righteous run into it and are ſaved.* It is Jeſus Chriſt that ye are invited unto. Hence,

Doct. II. *Theſe chambers are ſafe, and they who are therein need not fear wrath.*

See for the confirmation of this point Iſa. xxxii. 2. *A man ſhall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, as a ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land.* There is the deſcription of theſe chambers; they are chambers of ſafety, no wind can win there into them, no tempeſt can overtake them who are there, ye are without the flood-mark of the wrath of God; and they are chambers of delight, ye will not want refreſhing; they are *rivers of water in a dry place, the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land:* We cannot commend them unto you, for it paſſeth the eloquence of angels to do it; but enter theſe, and ye ſhall find more than we can tell you; enter, and ye ſhall find more than ye will be able to tell yourſelves: Enter, we ſay, that is in the invitation. But ye will ſay, How ſhall we enter? What is requiſite for our entering? What will take us in? I anſwer, *Faith.* That is the thing will take you in; that is the key will open theſe doors, the uſe of the means and the exerciſe of faith, the hand of duty, and the key of faith; but take notice, it is *true ſaving faith;* it is neither hiſtorical, temporal, nor the faith of miracles, but it is *ſaving faith*, whereby Chriſt is only received and reſted upon; it is faith as an inſtrument apprehending the object, Chriſt: It is that, I ſay, which taketh you in.

But

But for your more clear uptaking hereof, consider what is requisite in *true saving faith.*

1. A deep sight and sense of your lost condition, that ye are destroyed, liable to the wrath of God, and all the curses in the law.

2. A deep sense of this, that there is nothing in you, or that ye can do, that will help you; it is beyond all created power to recover you; and so not at all seeking to establish a self-righteousness, it is, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest,* Matth. xi 28.

3. A right sense of the all-sufficiency that is in Jesus Christ and his excellency drawing the heart out after him as all the desire of the soul, and so closing with him. Therefore, ye who remain senseless of your lost condition, have a care; ye are not yet in these chambers.

But that I may make it clear unto you, consider, moreover, if ye would enter into these chambers.

1. Ye must close with Christ alone, there must nothing have a share in the meritorious cause of bringing you there but himself alone; ye must not lay part of the weight upon him, and part upon yourselves and your duties: No, no; he must either have it all upon his back, or else he will have none of it! Therefore take heed to yourselves.

2. You must close with full Christ, as Prophet, Priest, and King: As a prophet to teach you his will: He must be your School-master: As priest, through whose sacrafice only the Father must accept you, and who continually makes intercession at his right hand for you: And as King to sway a sceptre in your soul, to rule you according to his own law, and to cast down, and to cast out every thing exalting itself against his kingdom within you.

O take heed to this! ye who regard not his will, ye who give him not a throne in your hearts; without this ye cannot enter into these chambers: And assure yourselves, if he were reigning in you, ye would care more, and contend more for his kingdom without you, and in the world. Take heed to this, ye who care not though a tyrant possess his throne, and, as it were spoil him of his princely robes. Take heed to this, ye who stand not to hold down his kingdom by upholding of his enemy's.

3. Ye must, if ye will enter into these chambers, close with all the conveniencies that follow him: His cross must be taken up, Luke ix. 23, 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: But whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.* Whatever he calls you unto must be embraced: Your heart must subscribe to the reasonableness and desirableness of every one of these in-

con-

conveniencies, but let us change their names, and call them *conveniencies* and *Chriſtian advantages*, and ſo we may; for they are of ſpecial good uſe to Chriſtians; theſe are a part of the diſcipline of Chriſt's ſchool, and ſome ſay this is David's meaning, Pſal. cxvi. 13. where he ſays, *I will take the cup of ſalvation:* That is, as they ſay, the cup of affliction, as that whereby the Lord works the ſalvation of his people; and ſo indeed the cup of affliction may be called the cup of ſalvation. Now that is the way ye muſt enter.

Uſe. O come away! Let us hear what ye ſay to it. Are ye willing to enter this way? Think upon it This is the way ye muſt enter; and in our telling of it, we may tremble to think upon this generation, who will not cloſe with theſe (ſo called) inconveniencies. We have no ſkill of peoples cloſing with Chriſt, who will not cloſe with theſe. But Oh! what ſay ye unto us? What is your reply? Is it not this, "That "neither death nor life. nor angels, nor principalities, nor "powers, nor things preſent nor things to come, nor height, "nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us "from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord?" Is this your ſaying? Then come away, take him, take on his yoke; *for his yoke is eaſy and his burden is light.*

SERMON II.

ISAIAH xxvi. 20.

Come, my people enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee: Hide thyſelf as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over-paſt.

THIS is the way that folk undo themſelves and forſake their own mercies: That which ought to chaſe them to God chaſes them out from him. All hypocritical convictions only put them the farther away from the Phyſician; ſo it is with judgment, which ſhould put folk to their duties, they are thereby put from it. When the Lord furbiſhes his glittering ſword of juſtice, then it is to drive his own children unto his own hand, *Come, my people.*

Ye know the laſt occaſion how we divided theſe words: You know alſo, how that before we left the *firſt* head, we ſaid, it would be requiſite to ſhew unto you, who it is that comes to Chriſt, and who it is that comes not: But we told you,

you, that it would come more fitly in the *ſecond* head; yet to make way for it, we proceeded foreward unto the *third* thing in the words: And now, having touched that a little, we return again, as we told you we propoſed to do, and ſhall as the Lord will aſſiſt, open the *ſecond* head, further declaring who are his people; *viz.* Theſe, as we were ſaying, who have made a covenant with him by ſacrafice, to be accepted only through the ſacrafice of his Son, and who ſacrafice away themſelves unto him. In a word, it is theſe who are righteous, and live righteouſly. Theſe who are righteous, are theſe who are fled into Chriſt for his righteouſneſs, and have gotten themſelves clothed therewith.

But that ye may the more clearly take up who thoſe are who come unto Chriſt, before we give you ſome marks of them, and ſome rules how to apply theſe marks, we ſhall firſt declare who it is that comes not.

1. Theſe come not unto Chriſt, who come not from all ſin, Ezek. xviii. 21. *But if the wicked will turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live he ſhall not die.* Ye ſee the condition; it is if ye will turn from all ſin, both omiſſion and commiſſion; from all ſin unto all duty; leaving all ſin, and taking up all Chriſtian duty. Therefore remember, if ye entertain any one idol, it will keep Chriſt out. Many ſay of ſome idol-ſin, that they do not quit, as Lot ſaid of Zoar, *It is a little one, therefore let me brook it.* But remember what David ſaith, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me,* Pſal lxvi. 18. Remember this and deſtroy not yourſelves, ye who follow not groſs ſwearing, drinking, or whoring, and the like, yet cleave unto your petty minched oaths, and your idle vain diſcourſe, and your light converſation. O remember this! ye who have any one predominant whoſe head ye clap: Your right hand, and your right eye ſins muſt be cut off, and plucked out, before ye can enter into the kingdom of heaven: I ſay, if ye entertain any predominant, it ſpeaks out this, that ye would as well entertain all ſins, if your inclination was as bent upon them, and that ye do not leave them as they are hateful to God, but only as they are not ſo delightſome or hateful unto you. O take heed! *except ye repent and amend, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Rmember this, ye moral civilians, who are not chargeable with groſs profanity in your private walk, yet have your hands imbrued in blood, and have them defiled with public land-ſins, which procure land-judgments: Ye take a liberty to pay ceſs, and fines, and tiends to Baal's prieſts, and do many other things to ſtrengthen the enemies of our Lord, and condemn his cauſe: I ſay, take heed to yourſelves, *except ye repent and amend, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Remember this, ye who turn

not

not to take up all Chriſtian duties with you; ye think it enough if ye babble over two or three words at night and at morn to yourſelves, though you ſet not up the worſhip of God in your families; and if ye do that, ye think that enough, though ye neither put to your hand to act with the Lord, nor ſympathize with his afflicted people, nor imbody yourſelves in ſociety with them, to cry for all the abominations of the land. O take heed! *except ye repent and amend, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*

2. Theſe come not unto Chriſt, who, though they may come a great length, not to be chargeable by men, neither with omiſſion nor commiſſion, yet reſt there; all that will not take them to heaven. Paul, before his converſion (he reports of himſelf) Phil iii. 6. *was touching the righteouſneſs which is of the law blameleſs.* He was as trim a legaliſt as the beſt of you; but mark what he ſays of himſelf, in the 7th, 8th, and 9th verſes, "But what things were gain to me, thoſe "I counted loſs for Chriſt, yea doubtleſs and I count all "things but loſs, for the excellency of the knowledge of "Chriſt Jeſus my Lord: For whom I have ſuffered the loſs "of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win "Chriſt, and be found in him, not having mine own righ-"teouſneſs, which is of the law, but that which is through "the faith of Chriſt, the righteouſneſs which is of God by "faith. There is that ye muſt only reſt on, and no where elſe, but upon the complete and imputed righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt: Therefore take heed how ye build.

3. Theſe come not unto Jeſus Chriſt, who feed themſelves up in that deluding fancy, that they have not ſo much need of him as others have, by reaſon of their thinking their ſins to be but little ſins. O! ſay ſome, I am not like the prophane and wicked; what then need I fear? O poor fool! mind what the apoſtle tells thee, Gal. iii. 10. "For in ſuch a "caſe thou art under the law; and as many as are of the "works of the law are under the curſe;" for it is written "Curſed is every one that continueth not in all things which "are written in the law to do them." A pen-knife can take away the life as well as a broad ſword. Indeed, I think the caſe of the wicked and prophane is more hopeful than thy caſe, becauſe they will be ſooner gotten convicted of the neceſſity of repentance than thou wilt.

4. Theſe come not unto Chriſt, who becauſe they meet with favourable diſpenſations and great proofs of the Lord's general providences, and thereupon conclude all is well with them. Think upon what David ſays, Pſal. xvii. 14. "From "men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, "which have their portions in this life, and whoſe belly thou "filleſt with thy hid treaſure: They are full of children, and

" leave the reſt of their ſubſtance to the babes. *None* know-
" eth love or hatred by all that is before him, Eccl. ix. 1.

5. Theſe come not to Chriſt, who think all is right with them, becauſe they are not challanged in their conſciences. O mad fools! whoſe hearts are ſealed with obduration; the ſaddeſt place in all the ſcripture holds forth your caſe, Hoſea iv. 17. *Ephraim is joined to his idols: Let him alone.* When ye drop into hell, the fire thereof will ſoon burn up that thick ſkin that is grown upon your conſciences.

6. Theſe come not to Chriſt, who reſt upon their apprehended ſorrow for ſin. O! ſay they, I am not ſuch a fool as to think all is well, becauſe I want challenges, but becauſe I have them: Remember Eſau, remember Judas. Your building upon your ſorrows and tears, is like a man that builds upon a flow-moſs.

7. Theſe come not unto Chriſt, who fall off the common road of ſin unto duty, and reſt there: Mind what our Lord ſays of the conceited Phariſee, Luke xviii. 11, 12, 13, 14. that though he was not an extortioner, unjuſt, nor an adulterer, and faſted twice a week, and paid tythes of all that he had poſſeſſed, yet he went not down to his houſe ſo juſtified as the poor publican did: Yet ye will ſay, I am far from ſwearing, drinking, *&c.* and have betaken myſelf to the ſociety of the people of God; and I read and pray, *&c* therefore all is well. O poor fool! thy caſe is worſe than ever. O! we tremble to think upon the multitude that pray themſelves unto hell. This may be compared to David indeed, who kills his ten thouſands. What ſhall I liken you to? Ye are like a man that diggeth deep down, and caſteth out the old earth, but brings new earth of his own mould and fills up again, and goes not the length of the rock.

8. Theſe come not unto Chriſt, who even go that length, as to aſſent to the ſpiritual meaning of the law, and reſt there. This is much indeed; this is a great length; yea, a greater length than the moſt part of you who are hearing me this day have come unto, and yet they are far from the kingdom of heaven. Obſerve that paſſage, Mark xii. 32, 33. where a ſcribe anſwered our Lord, and ſaid, " To love the Lord with " all the heart, and with all the underſtanding, and with all " the ſoul, and with all the ſtrength, and to love his neigh-" bour as himſelf, is more than whole burnt-offerings and " ſacrifices." To whom our Lord replies, verſe 34, " Thou " art not far from the kingdom God.

9. Theſe come not unto Jeſus Chriſt, who have common gifts and reſt there. O! ſay ye, I find a faculty of prayer, I want not words enough and get them bravely ſet upon the pins, and I have great knowledge of the ſcripture, and I am ſtraight and not byaſſed in my judgment; and what need ſuch a man

a man as I fear? O deluded fool! consider what Paul says, 1 Cor. xiii 2. "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I "have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have "not charity, I am nothing." No doubt, Judas had much of this; God will give gifts unto persons, for the behoof and advantage of others: but when he gives grace; it is ay for their own advantage; yea, the devil himself is better gifted, and hath more knowledge than you all have.

10. These come not unto Christ, who suffer many things materially for the truth, and have some seeming fruits thereof, and rest there: Do not think that your suffering your goods to be spoiled, and yourselves cast out of your habitation, before ye comply with the enemy, is a ground, from which ye may conclude all to be right: Nay, I tell you, as the apostle says, "Though ye should bestow all your goods "to feed the poor, though ye give your body to be burned, "and have not charity, it profits you nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Yea, the same apostle supposeth, Gal. iii. 4. that there may be much suffering in vain, "Have ye suffered so many things "in vain? if it be yet in vain." There are many of you that are suffering this day materially for Christ; materially we say and not formally; for hypocrites never win to sincerity in their doings and sufferings, nor to do them as to God; and yet ye will get hell to suffer in through all eternity; yea, a man when his credit is straitly engaged, he may give his life for the cause, and yet get hell for his reward.

11. These come not unto Christ, who have only a historical and temporary faith, instead of a saving faith; though ye should believe all the truths in the Bible, yet that will not avail you, the devils believe and tremble; yea, though ye should give your general assent to the way of salvation by Christ, yet unless ye receive and embrace him, and rest upon him, all will be for nought: Look the case of his people, Isa. xlviii. 2. *Who call themselves of the holy city, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel;* but what says the Lord of them, *Yet not in truth, nor in righteousness,* O take heed what ye are doing! and do not deceive yourselves, for ye may win this length, as to be convinced, that it is good to come unto Christ, and think ye have done it, being blinded by your pride, and may some way comfort yourselves as if ye had done it, in this your presumptuous dream, and yet really never have done it; never really have been brought to deny your own righteousness, and to receive Christ, relying only upon him for attaining of life through his righteousness and satisfaction.

12. These come not unto Christ, who have only the common operation of the Spirit upon the affection within, and resting there, conclude that all is well with them. We have

already ſpoken of the danger of reſting upon apprehended ſorrow for ſin, for there may be much alſo of the flaſhes of joy, tenderneſs, and heart-meltings, which hypocrites may have at ſometimes by another. Conſider theſe who were John's hearers, John v. 35 who for a ſeaſon rejoiced in his light. O! beware of goſpel hypocriſies, take not flaſhes for converſion. If it could be determined how great a length hypocrites may come, we think it would ſiſt here. O what ſhall we ſay of it! do what they will, and come as great a length as they can, they never come unto Chriſt, who are not fully denied to themſelves, and poſitively reſt only upon Jeſus Chriſt for juſtification and ſanctification. True faith hath two voices, (1) It calls and cries, O ſinner! lean not to thyſelf, reſt not there. (2) O ſinner! reſt on Jeſus Chriſt, and lean unto himſelf.

Use. Now, O believers! ſearch and try yourſelves, ſet about it earneſtly, this is your work, and it will not be done ſlumbering and ſleeping. There are many of you here this day, who are not come the length of ſome of theſe ſteps which we have named; yea, ye may come through them all every one, and if ye go not further, ye will never win to Chriſt: And in his name I tell you, *Except your righteouſneſs exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Ye know we gave you ſome hints of theſe who are the Lord's people, *viz.* theſe who have come unto Chriſt, and are made righteous, and live righteouſly: And for the more clearing of it, we now declare who theſe are who have come unto him, by giving ſome marks and evidences how the ſame may be known. We are not now ſpeaking of being in Chriſt, as a creature by creation and preſervation, nor as a member externally, but as a member internally and effectually. But ye will ſay, how is this? *Anſ* By the ſtrict union and communion betwixt Chriſt and believers, which flows from the ſtrictneſs of the bond; to wit, his word and Spirit on his part, and faith and love on their part. Now, we ſay, how will that be known? Well, we will give you theſe marks; therefore try yourſelves.

For, 1. If ye come to Chriſt, then ye will find in you a hatred of ſin naturally, and a deſire to all good, though often ye may fail in the performance, Rom. vii 15. "That "which I do, I allow not, for what I would, that I do not, but what I hate that I do." 1 John iii. 6. "Whoſoever "abideth in him ſinneth not;" to wit, 1 Purpoſely. 2. Willingly. 3. Affectionately. 4. Not unto death: For the Lord's people have, (1.) Grief (2.) Care to recover. (3.) Fear to ſin. O can ye run on in ſin without returning and care of repentance? If it be ſo, ye are not in this living root.

2. If

2. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will find this in you, a right and high eſteem of the Lord's mercy; he and his ſalvation, will be only precious in your eyes. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered*, Pſalm xxxii. 1. That will be your thoughts.

3. If ye be come unto Chriſt, ye will find this in you, a love unto all the ways of holineſs, as well as unto happineſs itſelf: Yea, your heart will be ſo drawn after that noble device of ſalvation, ſeeing all the glorious attributes of God ſo ſhining therein, that ye would in no ways be content to go to heaven another way, than that glorious way, though it could be had; and this is all the Lord requires of you, only a pleaſing the device. This is the brazen ſerpent, which ye muſt look unto for healings. O come away.

4. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will find this in you, an acting upon God as he acts upon you: Hath he called you? then ye will call upon him; hath he juſtified you? then ye will juſtify him.

5. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will find this in you, a ſelf-denial, and a daily taking up of the croſs, againſt your own inclinations, the doctrine and practice of mortification; and a cutting yourſelf ſhort of carnal delights will be deſired by you.

6. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will be ſubject unto him willingly, and yield ſweetly unto the ſwaying of his ſceptre in your ſoul.

7. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye are ſubject unto him univerſally in all his commands.

8. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye are ſubject unto him ſincerely in all things, ſeeking his glory.

9. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye are ſubject unto him conſtantly, obeying him without wearying.

10. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then his word abideth in you, 1 John ii. 14. If that which ye have heard from the beginning remain in you, ye ſhall continue in the Son and in the Father, it muſt abide in you, ſo as your mind underſtands it, your hearts affect it. O how ill hath that which ye have read and heard, remained in you! few, few be in Chriſt.

11. If ye be come unto Chriſt, ye will find his Spirit *leading you into all truth*, John xvi. 13. Teaching and leading unto, and confirming you in all duty; but do not miſtake, we mean no enthuſiaſtic ſpirit, but his word and Spirit which he hath conjoined together, Iſa. lvi. 21. *My Spirit which is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart*, &c.

12. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will find his Spirit convincing you of ſin.

13. If

13. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then he will find his Spirit ruling and commanding you, caſting down all things exalted againſt Chriſt's kingdom.

14. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye will find his Spirit in you by ſupplication, leading unto ſenſe of ſin, and apprehenſion of the neceſſity of mercy, which makes fervency letting the ſoul ſee God only appeaſed in Chriſt, and ſealeth the truth of God's promiſes and records in his word, on thy ſoul.

15. If ye be come unto Chriſt, then ye may find faith in you, that will be your ſtay in all ſtates, actions, temptations, and afflictions: This is hard to find out, yet it may be found out; if ye have a deſire for it, ye may have it.

16. If ye come unto Chriſt, then ye will find an admirable change in you, a new ſpirit without guile, a new judgment, new deſires, new affections, love, hatred, ſorrow, joy, new ſenſes, eyes, ſmelling, ears, taſte, and feeling.

USE. Now find ye theſe, or any of theſe marks really in you, then doubt no more, miſbelieve no more, all is ſure, ye are come unto Chriſt, and ſeeing ye are come unto him, preſs always for more and more of his likeneſs, for a progreſs in ſanctification. Remember, 1 John ii. 6. *He that ſaith he abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo to walk even as he walked.* And it leads us unto the

III. Thing in the opening up of this point, *to wit*, To declare who are his people. They, as we were ſaying, who are righteous, and live righteouſly. Now theſe who are righteous, are theſe who have fled unto Chriſt, and they indeed live righteouſly. Yet to make it more clear, we ſhall in ſhort tell you, who they are who live righteouſly: Theſe, *to wit*, in a word, *Who walk as he walked.*

Omnia nos Chriſti vita docere poteſt.

(1.) They live righteouſly, beginning all things with God, referring all things to God.

(2.) They do all things by the warrant of the word, contemning their own wills, that they might do the Lord's: *Not my will, but thy will be done:* They muſt loſe their life, before they loſe their obedience.

(3.) They walk holily, *Be ye holy, as I am holy*, John. iii. 3. *Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.*

(4.) They walk fruitfully, they go about doing good; O ſad! not only the unfruitful walking of this generation, but even the ſtumbling that they are in.

(5.) They walk juſtly, not wronging any. Theſe are they who live righteouſly, who walk ſo as Chriſt walked: O! how few righteous livers are amongſt you, and theſe only are his people,

people, righteous perſons, righteous livers, and it is theſe whom the Lord hath chambers for.

Now we proceed to the rules how to apply theſe evidences.

1. Though ye find them not all, yet if ye find one or more of them really, then comfort yourſelves.

2. If ye find not what formerly ye have found labour more to renew the ſame, than to ſeek a ſight of the old.

3. Do not try yourſelves in the hour of temptation.

4. When ye find marks and evidences, do not reſt upon them; for though ye have them, they may ſoon be gone.

5. Do not purſue ſo much to ſatisfy your ſenſe for the preſent, as to have a ſolid well-grounded aſſurance for the time to come.

6. Be not ſo deſirous to know what ye are, as what ye ſhould do. Spend not your time in queſtioning your ſtate, as ye do, but uſe the means of real union and communion with Chriſt: This is the ſhorteſt and ſureſt way.

7. Judge not yourſelves by the meaſure of your graces, but by the ſincerity of them.

8. Compare not yourſelves too much to the ſaints, but judge yourſelves by the word.

9. When there is a ſerious wreſtling againſt corruption, though not meeting with any ſenſible victory, yet caſt not away your hope. Paul tells you, Rom. vii. how far a child of God may be enſlaved by a body of ſin.

10. Remember, ye have to do with God in a covenant of grace. Now, what more ſhall we ſay? We muſt end as we began. O! come away, come away to Chriſt, this Prince of delights, come and enter into theſe *chambers*, and for your encouragement take theſe *motives*.

1. Come away and *enter*, then your condition will be honourable with Chriſt.

2. Comfortable. All your debts are paid.

3. Rich. All that Chriſt hath, grace and goodneſs is all thine.

4. Fruitful. He purgeth his branches.

5. Safe. He takes all your quarrels upon him, your head will be above the water.

6. It is the only ſtate of perfection, which is in him, and derived to us.

7. Then all the promiſes are yours.

8. It is a ſure ſtate; in this life ye have ſtrength againſt temptations: *my grace is ſufficient for you.*

9. In death, aſſurance. They that ſleep in Chriſt, periſh not.

10. In the day of judgment, boldneſs; O come away, the chambers are every way pleaſant, and every way ſafe, come away, the indignation ſhall not overtake you.

The

The Lord is come down with an univerſal deluge of wrath, upon the generality: Come away, and ye ſhall be hid. O! he is willing, he is willing, he would not have ſent his meſſage to you this day, if he had not been willing: And now, when ye are keeping a faſt day unto the Lord, who hath given you this call, Pray that he would help you rightly to improve it: I ſay, O improve it rightly, by your anſwering of it.

But ye will ſay, how ſhall we improve it?

ANSWER. 1. Improve it, by ſeeing that it is only of the Lord's free mercy, that he hath given it, Ezekiel xxxvi. 22. *I do not this for your ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael, but for mine holy name's ſake.*

2. Improve it, by being thereby the more ſtirred up to your duty, Pſalm cxvi. *Becauſe he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.* Hath he heard your prayers in this? then be more in prayer, and be more ſingle in prayer, and all other duties, than ever heretofore.

3. Improve it, by loving the Lord himſelf, who hath granted you it, Pſalm cxvi. *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice and ſupplication.*

4. Improve it, by ſeparating yourſelves more from the abominations of the time, by making clean hearts, and clean hands, Pſal. vi. 8. *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, the Lord hath heard the voice of my ſupplication.*

5. Improve it, by having a high and becoming eſteem of the ordinances, yet keeping in its own room, and not reſting upon it, but ſeeking unto the Lord himſelf, Amos v. 4 *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live, but ſeek not to Bethel.*

6. Improve it, by anſwering his call therein, and let not the Lord have it to ſay of you, that after long and many refuſals, *Yet I came and ſtretched forth my wings, and would have gathered you, as a hen gathereth her chickens, but ye would not.* O let him not have that to ſay, Come away, come away, *Enter into your chambers, and ſhut your doors about you, and hide yourſelves as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpaſt.*

The preceeding preface, lecture, and ſermons, were the firſt public days work, which Mr James Renwick had in Scotland, which was at Darmead in Clydeſdale, Nov. 23d, 1683.

PREFACE

PREFACE.

BELOVED, the apoſtle Paul ſays to the Corinthians, *I am jealous over you with a godly jealouſy;* ſo that I may ſay to you, Sirs,

1. I am jealous over you with a great jealouſy that the moſt part of you that are come here, are but mere-black atheiſts; ſo that if there were an impartial ſearch made on each of us, although we were living in the midſt of the church, it is to be feared, that the moſt of you who are come here, would be found very atheiſts; but think not, becauſe you are living in the midſt of the church, that the judgment of God when paſſing through the land will miſs ſuch, or paſs by you; nay, it will find you out, and that ere it be long, for he is coming to judge, and the books will be opened, and all that are atheiſts ſhall periſh.

2. I am jealous that the moſt part of you who are come here, will not win through the ſtorms, which are coming on theſe lands, for all that we have met with is little, to what is coming; and the moſt part will fall, yea, there are many that have come through many ſtraits and ſuffering, that will not win thro' the ſtorm that is coming, as it was with Peter, when he went down into the ſea, he walked a while above the water; but after, when the waves began to blow hard, he began to ſink; when the ſtorm increaſed he fainted, even ſo I fear it be with many of you; yea, even theſe who have endured ſtorms and difficulties heretofore, I fear a growing ſtorm will make you to ſink ere all be done; yet I would not have you to think that I am uncharitable in ſo ſaying; but I ſay it, to make you ſeek ſtrength to ſtand. O ſeek the increaſe of all grace, and eſpecially of faith, againſt this ſtorm come on you.

3. I am jealous over you, as to your willingneſs to come to Chriſt, O ſirs, are you willing to come to Chriſt, and to have your will changed? It is the conſent of the will, that will carry you through with the conſent of the perſuaſion; for the perſuaſion will not do your turn, but you muſt receive him with the conſent of the will alſo. O then receive him ſo in fear, and in love, and ſeek to be kept in his hands.

4. I am jealous over you with a great jealouſy, that many of you know not what you are ſeeking, whereas your many inconveniences, difficulties and diſcouragements in your way, do call you to ſearch, try and know your errands; O ſeek a right impreſſion of the majeſty of God upon you. So much for the *firſt* thing that I had to ſay to you.

And the *ſecond* thing I have to ſay to you, is ſome things I would require of you that are come here. And,

1. I require you to ſeek a right impreſſion of the majeſty of God upon you, that you may be ſuitably exerciſed thereunto.

2. I require you to be ſincere in ſeeking of God; for ſeldom any get Chriſt in the ordinance that come for other ends; it is true, ſome have gotten good of the ordinances that came for other ends, but it is very rare; however, be what you will, or your ends what they will, we wiſh you to be profiters by your here coming.

3. I require you to come empty, O come empty of all things; O the ſenſe of your neceſſity would make you with Jacob to ſay, *I will not let thee go, except thou bleſs me*, for thou only can help me in whatever condition I am in.

4. I require you that are come here, to look to the Lord for your profiting in your here coming; O! we are but poor empty creatures, and have nothing to impart unto you, therefore we beſeech you to look to the Lord, that muſt give and beſtow on you that which muſt and can do you good. O then look unto him for your profiting and gain in your here coming.

LECTURE II.

PSALM xxiii. 1,——6.

1. *The Lord is my ſhepherd, I ſhall not want.*
2. *He maketh me to ly down in green paſtures: He leadeth me beſide the ſtill waters.*
3. *He reſtoreth my ſoul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteouſneſs for his name's ſake.*
4. *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy ſtaff they comfort me.*
5. *Thou prepareſt a table before me in the preſence of mine enemies: thou anointeſt my head with oil, my cup runneth over.*
6. *Surely goodneſs and mercy ſhall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the houſe of the Lord for ever.*

MY friends, we would be a bleſſed company, if we could ſay with David, *The Lord is my ſhepherd*; if you could once ſay this, then you might lay claim to all the reſt that is

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in the pſalm. Now the pſalmiſt lays down here, many brave concluſions from the Lord's being his ſhepherd; and by theſe he comforts himſelf. And the

1. Concluſion he draws from this, is, that he leads him in green paſtures, and by the quiet and ſtill waters; whereby is to be underſtood, abundance of all things needful for him in ſpirituals and temporals, which he enjoyed with much eaſe and pleaſure, like as a flock of ſheep coming to quiet waters, get eaſy drinking thereof with all eaſe and conveniency, without impediment.

2. He concludes, That he ſhall be well fed and nouriſhed, there was no doubt of plenty, they ſhould (meaning himſelf and all the truly godly) be fed as with marrow and with fatneſs in his paſtures.

3. He concludes, That he leads them in righteouſneſs, as if he had ſaid, there is no doubt of their ſtraying here, for his way is perfect and converts the ſinner; therein making them perfect in righteouſneſs.

4. His paſture is a ſure paſture, for he ſays he, *he will be my guide, his rod and his ſtaff is with me;* and being mentioned here, the rod ſignifies his correction, and his ſtaff imports his government, or holds out his kingly office and power, that he rules by his ſovereign authority.

5. There is this held out in this pſalm, that this paſture is a pleaſant paſture, and full of ſpiritual dignities; and holds out his aſſurance of his fruition and enjoyment thereof all his life.

6. There is this alſo held out by this pſalm, his duration and continuance in that bleſſed and happy eſtate.

Now we ſhall obſerve ſome things from theſe concluſions, which the pſalmiſt lays down here; and ſo from the *firſt* concluſion that he is his ſhepherd, we ſhall obſerve,

1. That the pſalmiſt in ſo doing, doth it after the manner of men; and yet God is not angry nor diſpleaſed with him for this ſtyle: You know that a ſhepherd is not much in reſpect with the world; and yet our Lord ſtoops ſo low, that he condeſcends to take on him this ſtyle of being a ſhepherd. And hence we may ſee, his love to his church and ſheep; as alſo, that he will be careful of them and lead them.

2. That before a perſon can draw any ſure concluſion of their ſtate, they muſt get him to be theirs, or they muſt have an intereſt in him; O then firs labour to get him to be your God! O get him to be your King! get him to be the object of your love above all things; and then fear not, you ſhall not want any thing that he ſees good for you. It may be ſome of you think that you have many ſtraits and wants as to the the world, yet look on that as God's good dealing with you, ſince he ſees it better for you to want than to have your de-

ſire therein; what is good the Lord will give, and what would ye have more than take all well out of his hand.

3. Obſerve, That the Lord who is a good ſhepherd, leads his people in a good paſture, though the world thinks our caſe very ſad; and though enemies caſt out the people of God to hunger and die in the fields, yet they ſhall be fed for all that, and ſhall grow and flouriſh; O then ſirs! get Chriſt to be your ſhepherd, and you ſhall get life, you ſhall get grace and glory, yea, and your wilderneſs ſhall become a fruitful field, and you ſhall not be barren.

Next from the *ſecond* concluſion that he draws, which was, that he ſhould be fed, from that, obſerve,

1. That though the people of God be overcome ſometimes, yet he will come and reſtore life and health again; or thus, though they be like to be ſwallowed up, both as to their ſpirituals and temporals; yet there is a day of reſtoration coming, in which they will be revived again: but ah! I fear there be many of you ſo ignorant of God, that you do not diſcern between his preſence and his abſence; and you that are ſuch, know not what that reſtoring or reviving is.

2. Obſerve, That there is no ſafety in ſuch a ſtumbling day, but to ſeek to be led and guided of God, now when all are out of the way; and for my part I know of nothing that will bring or ſet folk right, and keep them right in ſuch a day, but a deep impreſſion of the wrath of God, and of the cauſe of God upon your ſpirits, and a deep impreſſion of your duty to God, and to your generation; and never think you will be right while you come to this, and to look only to God for your leading and guiding.

3 Obſerve, that you muſt look only for good in and thro' Chriſt's merits, and no other way, it muſt come all thro' that channel, and not for any thing in you, or ought that you can do; but look to God, who muſt come down and condeſcend to you, for you will never be able to come up to him, he muſt (to ſpeak ſo) make the travel, for we cannot do it; O ſirs! here is a broad field and large paſture to feed on, therefore, O ſirs? come here and be ſatisfied with this fruitful field of Chriſt's merits and bounty.

But next from the *third* concluſion, *viz.* That in the Lord's moſt righteous paths, is the ſafeſt paſture. Obſerve,

1. That the people of God may be in that caſe, that they cannot tell where they are, they may be in great trouble of ſpirit, and great darkneſs, and go through many a ſad and dark ſtep, Iſa. xliii. 1. Yea, they may go through many a weary ſtep, ere they come to their outgate from under theſe, yet fear not, it will come in due time; ye would ay be at a world of eaſe without any feck of trouble, you would be at that

that to have two ſummers in one year; but you muſt reſolve to have dark ſteps, to let you ſee your need of his guiding and leading you.

2. Obſerve, The people of God will not do any thing right, and they will fear and dread any thing, till once they get a ſaving ſight of Chriſt, and their intereſt made ſure in him; and then they will be bold, they will not fear, neither the fear of ſin, nor the fear of the puniſhment; O get this! and get faith in exerciſe; in the aſſurance of this, you may brag in your ſtrength, for faith is a great bragger; but you may ſtill ſee this, that it never brags in the creature, but in God, who can deliver out of all troubles and every difficulty, when he ſees his own time; and we may ſay this, that ſtraits and difficulties ſhould feed and imbolden the faith of the people of God; for, if you would aſk at David, What it was that made him ſo fearleſs and confident? Here is the reaſon of it, the Lord is with me, or thou art with me. O ſirs! ſeek to get the Lord with you; but ſeek not the aſſurance of this perverſe generation, ſeek not the aſſurance of compliers and their confederates; but ſeek that the Lord may be with you, and ſlaviſh fear ſhall flee away, and the fear of man ſhall flee away.

3. Obſerve, That God hath ſhewed the inſtruments wherewith he leads and guides his people, *viz. his rod and his ſtaff*, that is, his correction and government, doctrine, and diſcipline, by which he leads, governs, and feeds his people to their great comfort.

4. Obſerve, That by ſanctified trials, he makes his people a wiſe people, ſo that ſometimes, and in ſome reſpects, they become wiſer than their teachers; O ſirs! get this paſs and abſolution, viz. That you are intereſted in him, and that is wiſdom; but, though you ſhould be abſolved by all the world, if you want this, you ſhall be rejected of God: O then! ſeek your intereſt in him, and then all other things ſhall be ſure to you.

Next from the *fourth* concluſion, which he lays down in this pſalm, *viz* The ſureneſs of the believer's portion, tho' in ſight of their enemies.

1. Obſerve, That believers ſhall not want any thing that ſhall be for their good; O believe this! that even when you are meeting with robbing and ſpoiling, and caſting out of your houſes, and are cruelly uſed by enemies, ſo that you are become a by-word and deriſion, a proverb and a hiſſing, yea, a wonder in Iſrael, yet in all that, you are meeting with nothing but what ſhall be for your good; O believe this! believe this ſirs! and look to Chriſt who hath a broad back and ſtrong arms to bear you up in all theſe; O ſirs! do not comply with enemies, but betake yourſelves to Chriſt, and plead your neceſſity from theſe things, that he may be your guide, and

and get your intereſt made ſure in him, and you ſhall not want what is good; and as you will readily profeſs, that you will truſt your ſpiritual concernments to him, ſo let your temporal wants be on him alſo.

2. Obſerve, That his people ſhall be fed, were it even in the preſence of their enemies; although they ſeek to ſtarve you, and to make you miſerable by their acts and laws, which they put out againſt you; yet, though they ſeek to deſtroy you, fear not, neither for your ſpiritual nor temporal neceſſities, for they ſhall be ſeen to; dare any of you ſay, for all that the enemies have done, that ever you had cauſe to complain? although they have done all that they could to cut off the life both of ſoul and body, yet you are fed in both.

3. Obſerve, that the people of God are not only fed, but they are fed to the full, ſo that their cup runs over, and he anoints them with oil; oil is ſaid to make man's face to ſhine, and it is taken in ſeveral places of ſcripture for the graces of the Spirit, as a parable of the ten virgins, *&c.* but here it ſignifies their ſatisfaction in all their neceſſities in ſoul and body.

And from the *fifth* concluſion that he draws from this pſalm, *viz.* His holding out of God's favouring of him with his goodneſs.

Obſerve, 1. That we are to look to God, for the doing of the work himſelf, for his own name's ſake, and for nothing in us moving him to it: He ſays in another place, it is not for your ſake, but for his own name's ſake that he doth this.

2. Obſerve, That the believer's inheritance ſhall be made ſure to him; all things in the world ſhall vaniſh away; but the believer's portion ſhall never fail, nor vaniſh away.

Sixthly, and *laſtly* from the *ſixth* concluſion that he lays down here, *viz.* That the Lord is his dwelling-place, and that he ſhall have a ſure abode in his houſe. Obſerve,

1. That believers, and they that are really intereſted in him, ſhall dwell with him for ever; he hath a ſure abode for that party. *They ſhall go no more out*, &c. O ſirs! here is the believer's happineſs, which goes far beyond any temporal happineſs in the world. O! who is able to deſcribe this place of happineſs? It is a place of continual loving, a place of continual longing, and a place of continual ſatisfaction to all eternity.

2. Obſerve. That it is a place of continual continuing and abode; it will never end, it will continue for evermore: All other inheritances, pleaſures, and enjoyments will come to an end, and to many they will come to a ſorrowful and miſerable end, but this is an enduring ſubſtance, an inheritance that laſts for evermore.

Now

Now the *Uſe* we draw from all this, is an uſe of *inſtruction*. O ſirs! ſeeing there are ſo many ſweet things to be had with and in Chriſt, O then! come and accept of him, and receive him on his own terms. O ſirs! get an intereſt in him; get him to your ſhepherd, and you ſhall be led in his way, and ſhall get food to your ſouls. *To him be praiſe for evermore.* Amen.

SERMON III.

CANTICLES ii. 6.

His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.

NOW, my friends, I would inquire at you who are come here this night. Can you ſay any thing to purpoſe concerning true manifeſtations? Now, lay your hands to your hearts, and ſee what you can ſay concerning theſe things. But I may almoſt ſpeak as well of theſe things to the ſtones and dumb creatures beſide you, as ſpeak of them to many of you: And, O but it be ſad! that a people who have lived ſo long under the drop of the goſpel, ſhould be ſo ignorant of theſe things wherein lies the bleſſed ſtate, and happy lot of believers; yea, inſtead of that, ye rather look like a people come to ſee a ſtage play, than like a people come to ſeek Chriſt in the ordinances. O but Chriſt hath gotten a bad requital among you! But to come to the words. Here you have the ſpouſe, her laſt expreſſion or words, *&c.*

The laſt day we were on theſe words, ye heard one doctrine delivered and explained; and now, not to reſume it, we come to a ſecond doctrine from the words, and it is this.

DOCT. II. *That believers may attain to nearneſs with God, and the aſſurance of an intereſt in him.*

See for proof of this many places of the Pſalms, where *my Lord and my God* is expreſſed: And John xx. 28. *And Thomas anſwered and ſaid unto him, My Lord, and my God.* But miſtake not the faith of adherance for the faith of aſſurance; for ſaving faith may be, where aſſurance is not yet attained or made clear: But it is clear, that where the faith of aſſurance is, there is alſo the faith of adherance.

Now, from the doctrine, I ſhall ſpeak to theſe three things.

I. Shew

I. Shew you how to attain to the faith of aſſurance; and in order thereunto.

1. You muſt retain nothing that will darken your intereſt in Chriſt: And ſo ye muſt not entertain any idol in his room; for none who have true love to Chriſt will retain love to their idols, but will give all their heart to Chriſt; and, with Ephraim will ſay, *What have I to do any more with idols?* Hoſea xiv. 8.

2. You would be much in the exerciſe of right fear; he will give his love to them that fear him: This is not a ſlaviſh fear that I am ſpeaking of, but a filial fear; and that is a true godly fear.

3. You muſt have much tenderneſs. O ſeek a tender heart to mourn for all the wrongs that are done unto God in the land! O but much ſtupidity and want of tenderneſs appears greatly among you, which greatly mars your aſſurance.

4. Be diligent to get an intereſt in God, through Jeſus Chriſt. O! this will not be gotten done negligently: You muſt give all diligence to get it done and to attain it, for ſleeping will not do the turn: So then, do not think that you will attain it, as long as you are indifferent and negligent.

5. In order to this, you muſt get a deep ſenſe of your loſt condition. Study much the law, that thereby ye may win to ſee yourſelves loſt in Adam; for without the right taking up of the law, and your own loſt condition by the breach thereof, you will never be perſuaded to ſeek after that bleſſed Days-man, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the only Redeemer of God's elect, to deliver you out of that loſt ſtate and condition, which by nature you are in.

6. Then you muſt ſeek a deep apprehenſion of the love of God in Chriſt Jeſus: His love is a free love, there is nothing in you that can move him to pity you: O ſeek to have much of this manifeſted unto you, for thereby he gives you this aſſurance.

7. Meditate much upon the precious promiſes, held forth to believers in the ſcriptures through a Redeemer. O but there is great comfort in the believer's lot, who meditates much on the promiſes which are given to ſupport and comfort his people.

8. Be much in the exerciſe of the faith of adherence, which is the direct act of faith, in order to the attaining of aſſurance to the believer; and though it be not ſo comfortable to them that have it as the other, yet it is as ſure.

9. You muſt get the Lord's teſtimony, by his word and Spirit, that your intereſt is ſure that you may be confirmed in his way and teſtimony.

II. A ſecond thing to ſpeak to from the words, is concerning ſome advantages of the faith of aſſurance. And,

1. The firſt advantage of the faith of aſſurance, is, that mortification is much carried on thereby, to any thing in time, or that comes in competition with it. and any thing that folk claim as marks of this faith of aſſurance; if mortification be not carried on by it, and advanced they have reaſon to doubt of that aſſurance, and rather to conclude that to be a deluſion.

2. The ſecond advantage of aſſurance, is, that it makes them more humble who have it. After Paul won to the aſſurance of his intereſt, he call.d himſelf the leaſt of ſaints. O but humility be a pleaſant thing in the elect! Yea, it makes them very pleaſant.

3. The third advantage that attends the faith of aſſurance, is this, they are much quickened thereby: The pſalmiſt made this clear, when he ſpeaks ſo often of being quickened. And for my part, I like not that aſſurance that doth not ſtir up and quicken to duty in ſuch a day as this.

4. The fourth advantage that attends the faith of aſſurance, is, it makes them to go confidently to God in a ſtrait: For as the perſon looks on him as his God, ſo they come boldly to him, holding forth their intereſt in him, making that an argument of being heard, or that he muſt hear them.

5. The fifth advantage that attends the faith of aſſurance, is, that thereby Chriſt is more precious to them than all other things; for although he be an undervalued Chriſt in this generation, yet he is precious to them. O preſs forward for this mark of aſſurance!

6. The ſixth advantage that attends the faith of aſſurance is, that it makes them to be more in the duty of praiſe, and to ſay with the pſalmiſt, Pſalm cxviii. 28. *Thou art my God, and I will praiſe thee.* And it makes them to long more for him and for more of his fulneſs. O ſirs! if ye had right impreſſions of his fulneſs, ye would be longing to be with him; yea, ye would give him more ado.

7. The ſeventh advantage that attends the faith of aſſurance, is, that it will help them to endure in ſufferings, either in ſpirituals or temporals; yea, what is it that the faith of aſſurance cannot help them in? It can make them to eſteem a ſcaffold or impriſonment (or whatever would look terrible-like to others) for Chriſt and his cauſe, to be a pleaſant thing, and delightſome beyond all time's things; yea, theſe count the day of their death the moſt joyful day that ever they ſaw, when ſuffering for his cauſe, though indeed I think that theſe who ſuffer for Chriſt, who have only the faith of adherence, glorify God moſt; but theſe who have the faith of aſſurance in their ſufferings, find moſt comfort.

Now the uſe that I would make of this point, is,

1. An *Uſe* of *reproof*, to thoſe that quit Chriſt for the world, and will not be at the pains to try whether they have an intereſt in Chriſt or not. So then, come away, Sirs, try yourſeves, now you have an offer of Chriſt, will you not then try whether you be in Chriſt or not? O ſirs! come, receive and embrace him; but if you will not be concerned, or affected, nor receive and take the offer off your hand, then you will be great loſers and not he, for he ſtands in no need of you, but you of him; ſee then who will be the greateſt loſer.

Uſe 2. Submit to God, being in the uſe of means, for this faith of aſſurance; but as for the faith of adherence it is altogether neceſſary for ſalvation; yea, you muſt be peremptory in it, for it is eſſential to ſalvation.

Uſe 3 Of *reproof*, to thoſe who diſpute God's purchaſe, theſe who believe the devil's ſuggeſtions, and will quarel with God for what he doth.

Uſe 4. Of *reproof*, alſo to theſe who will not go about duty. O be intreated to ſet about your duty! though all ſhould go againſt you; and though you ſhould not meet with that ſucceſs in duty that you would be at, yet preſs forward.

Uſe 5. Is of *reproof* to them that content themſelves with any thing that looks like ſenſible preſence, and never preſs forward for aſſurance for the time to come, ſince ſome of his dear friends have win at it in time, as you find recorded of that great and worthy martyr, Mr Donald Cargill, who, when on the ſcaffold, declared that it was near thirty years ſince he was ſure of his intereſt in God, and all that time he durſt never queſtion it, ſo you may ſee that ſuch a thing is attainable in time.

Uſe 6. Is of *reproof*, to any that ſeek more to know what they are, than to know what they ſhould be and do; but if you would do right, ſeek to win at a well grounded, and well ordered walk, in order to your winning at aſſurance; and this is both the ſweet and the ſafe way; it is ſure and ſafe, I ſay, when rightly attained therefore let this be your ſtudy and main endeavour at all times.

Another general doctrine from this head is,

Doct. III. *That Chriſt walks with delight among believers.*

The firſt chapter of Revelation is a proof of this, for there Chriſt is ſaid to walk in the midſt of the ſeven candleſticks, meaning the ſeven churches; and in the fortieth Pſalm, it is ſaid he delights to do his Father's will. O that it were our delight to do him ſervice! He hath pleaſure to behold poor things ſeeking unto him, and putting their truſt in him. O but believers be a pleaſant ſight to him! he compares them to

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the lillies in reſpect of their common herbs; for the church is to Chriſt as the lily among the thorns. O believers! will ye come and be partakers of his divine nature, and you ſhall be like him, and pleaſant unto him, and he will greatly delight in you, and walk amongſt you: I need not prove this further, but any improvement and enlargement that I ſhall make thereon, ſhall be by way of uſe. And the

1 *Uſe* is of *exhortation*. O ſirs! admire at this love of Chriſt that he hath unto believers. It is ſaid that the heaven of heavens cannot contain him, and yet that he dwells with him that is of a humble and contrite ſpirit. O wonderful; that he will dwell with vile duſt. O then! wrap up yourſelves in admiration at his low condeſcendency.

Uſe 2. Is of *advice*. O then! admire the happy condition of believers, they ſhall dwell in the houſe of joy and delight for evermore: Who then would not quit and relinquiſh all things to be at him? O then! ſirs, quit your idols, and make choice of the roſe of Sharon, and him who is the lily of the valley.

Uſe 3. Is of *inſtruction*. O ſirs! is it with believers that Chriſt will dwell? O then! come and cloſe with him, that not only will dwell with you, but that can do all things for you, and unto you. O come unto him! But, O many of you are a ſtupid generation, who will not be affected with your own miſerable and loſt caſe and condition though he be offered unto you! But here in his name we invite you to come and cloſe with Chriſt and he will dwell with you, and you ſhall have all things; but if you refuſe, we leave it at your door as a witneſs againſt you. O ſirs! here I proteſt againſt your having any right, either to the faith of aſſurance or adherence, if ye come not and cloſe with him as he is offered in the goſpel: But, O come and cloſe with him! and then ye may lay claim to the faith of adherence and aſſurance that are to be had in him: O come, come!

Uſe 4. Is of *inſtruction*. O ſeek to partake of his righteouſneſs and kindneſs! and as he is holy, O ſeek to be holy like unto him! O let this furnace you have been in, and yet are in, this long time part you and your droſs! Now pray that it may not only diſcover the droſs that is in you, but that it may part you from your droſs, and that you may be made to rejoice now, and in the end to ſing ſongs of triumph. And together with a good walk and practice, labour to get the cauſe rightly ſtated in your hearts, and then you ſhall not be permitted to comply with enemies in the leaſt; and whatever enemies, and ſuch as comply with them, ſeek as a ſign of yielding or compliance from you, refuſe them in that, be it never ſo little; for the time is come that ye muſt ſuffer. O

then! ſtudy to ſuffer cleanly, for that will be peace of conſcience unto you in the end of the day.

And now, what think ye of yourſelves that are not come to Chriſt yet? O! while it is yet time, come and ſeek acquaintance with him, and halt not between two opinions, do not reſt on uncertainties, but ſeek to get it ſure: And you who have your intereſt in Chriſt, I ſay, ſee that you know that you have it, and ſeek for more confirmation in it, and for more communion and fellowſhip with him, for in it is your life, in it is your reſt, in it is your joy, and in it is your comfort: : I ſay, in the knowledge of it you will find peace.

Now to him who can give you this aſſurance, and the confirmation of it, and peace therein, we deſire to be found giving praiſe. *Amen.*

SERMON IV.

ISAIAH viii. 17.

And I will wait on the Lord that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him: Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for ſigns and for wonders in Iſrael.

THE prophet, in the former part of this chapter, has been threatning the overthrow of the adverſaries of Zion; he comes alſo to threaten ſad judgments on the moderate lands, which they ſhall not be able to reſiſt or eſcape from: And withal he ſerves an hibition upon all the Lord's people, not to join with the decliners in an evil time: And for preventing their deſtruction, he exhorts them to ſanctify the Lord of hoſts in their hearts, and only make him their fear, and cleave cloſe to him; and if they will do ſo, he promiſes to be a ſanctuary to them: But all that join with decliners in an ill time, he threatens their overthrow. But the prophet thinking theſe words would have no weight, except with a very few: Therefore he commands to ſeal up the law among my diſciples; and then he hints at the duty of the godly in an ill time, and of their lot: Their duty is to wait on the Lord; *I will wait on the Lord that hideth his face*, &c. where he ſpeaks of himſelf in the name of all the godly; and truly he tells what will be their lot who reſolve to be waiters,

and

and it is this, *They ſhall be ſigns and wonders in Iſrael.* Now, he hints not only at the children begotten by his miniſtry, that they ſhould be made ſigns and wonders among the ungodly and prophane, but alſo the children who, by their abiding faithful, though mocked at, yet their abiding faithful ſhould tie God to the church.

And then he warns them not to go to charmers, or dead dogs, but to the living and true God, *to the law and to the teſtimony.* He encourages them to go to God, and not to charmers; he threatens dreadful ſtrokes on them who go to theſe charmers; They ſhall curſe their king and look upward, and they ſhall receive no comfort from any of theſe whom they have followed Now, in the text there is,

1. The ſad caſe of the church of God, held out in theſe words, that God is ſaid to *hide his face from the houſe of Jacob.*

2. Ye have the ordinary lot of the church of God in that caſe, they may expect *to be made ſigns and wonders in Iſrael:* to be gazed on, and mocked at: But there is a mitigation in theſe words, *it is from me the Lord of hoſts:* As if he would ſay, ſeeing it is from the Lord of hoſts, we ought to bear it the better.

3. Ye have in the words, the duty of the people of God under that ſad lot, and that is *to wait on the Lord* till their ſentence come from him, until he plead their cauſe and execute judgment for them.

DOCT. I. *Many times it falls out to be the lot of the church of God, that he hides his face from them,* Iſa. xlvii. 13. *Truly thou art a God that hides thyſelf.* This is often the complaint of the Lord's people in ſcripture. For clearing of the doctrine, I ſhall ſpeak to theſe things;

I. What is meant by the Lord's hiding his face.

II. What be the cauſes why the Lord does ſo.

III. Too, What is the duty of the people of God in that caſe when he hides his face.

I. Then, what is meant by the Lord's hiding of his face? For *anſwer,*

1. By hiding of his face is meant, the Lord's overlooking or ſeeming to ſtand aloof from noticing his people's caſe: Hence the pſalmiſt complains, *Why ſtandeſt thou afar off, and how long wilt thou hide thyſelf?*

2. By the Lord's hiding of his face is underſtood, the reſtraining of his Spirit in the ordinances, and keeping back his influences therefrom, when the word of the Lord has not that kindly effect and operation on hearts as it has had formerly, but their hearts are hardened from his fear: Hence the prophet complaineth, *Why haſt thou hardened our hearts from thy*

thy fear? And it is juſt in beſide that word, *Where is the ſounding of thy bowels?*

3. By the Lord's hiding of his face, is meant, the Lord's reſtraining the ſpirit of prayer, Iſa. xliv. 6. *Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away, there is none that call upon thy name.* We have not a heart to pray, and he gives the reaſon, *For thou hides thyſelf.*

4. By the Lord's hiding of his face, is meant, the Lord's keeping up of his mind from his people The Lord is doing ſtrange things, but his people they complain; *we ſee not our ſigns, there is not a prophet among us that knows how long*, Pſal. lxxiv. 19. And Job complains of this, that *the Lord paſſes by on the right hand and on the left hand*, and he could not take up what he was doing I confeſs, when the Lord wraps up his mind in the public ordinances, it is the ſaddeſt of all the former ways that he hides his face.

II. A ſecond thing for the clearing up of the doctrine, why it is that the Lord hides his face from his people. I confeſs it is hard to tell all the reaſons the Lord may have; but it is very rare to ſee, neither can we ſay that the Lord hides his face from a whole land for their trial, though he may hide his face from a particular perſon for the trial of their faith; but not readily from a whole land but for the puniſhment of their ſin, and that becauſe there is no land ſo clean and upright, but the Lord may have many things againſt them: But the reaſons I ſhall ſpeak of, why it is that the Lord hides his face, are,

1. Sin ſeparates between God and us. Many groſs and grievous tranſgreſſions have filled this land and defiled it, ſo that the Lord has no more credit and honour by his people.

2. The Lord hides his face in the public ordinance, for the defect of the people in their approaching to God in them: There is hypocriſy and a defect in our frequenting ordinances, few come to hear with a reſolution to practiſe what they hear, Micah ii. 7. *Is the Spirit of the Lord ſtraitened? do not my words do good to them that walk uprightly?* If ye deal not deceitfully with God it will not be Thence I give the reaſons as particularly relating to the former cauſe of God's hiding of his face. But,

3. The Lord hides his face, in reſpect to the pouring out the ſpirit of prayer, becauſe the Lord has not a mind to make haſte to deliver the church: And I give this as a reaſon, becauſe, Pſalm x. 17. it is ſaid, *Thou wilt prepare their hearts, and incline thine ear to hear.* Whenever the Lord has a mind to deliver a people, he uſes to pour out a ſpirit of prayer.

4. The Lord hides his face, in order to the keeping up of his mind in the ordinances, that he may reduct his people to pure believing or nothing at all: For as long as we have a

gueſs

gueſs whereaway God is going, it is eaſy to know where he will land: But when God hides his face, and we have no open viſion as to his returning to the land, then try what thoughts ye have of God, or of his church, and work in the land.

III. What is the duty of the Lord's people in that caſe when he hides his face?

1. His people will ſearch and try their ways, and turn again to the Lord: This is thought a common truth, yet it is a good old truth. Many look for vain things to be done as their duty; but I aſſure you, till the land, and eſpecially the godly in it, ſearch and try what is the evil of their own ways, and turn from it, ye need never expect peace with God, or that he will be at peace with the land again: For this was the way that his people took of old, Lam. iii. 40. *Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord.* Therefore go, and take with the evil of your own ways and your own ſin, or ye ſhall not ſee a ſight of God in haſte again: Yea more, if ye do not ſearch and try your ways, vengeance will be upon the land.

2. When the Lord hides his face, it is the duty of all the godly to juſtify the Lord in all that he does, and to judge yourſelves guilty, and lay aſide your ornaments, and lie in the duſt: Ye do not believe what weight it has to lay aſide your braveries and ſit in the duſt before him: It is not a time now to buſk with braveries when ye ſhould ſit in ſackcloth; and ye would expect favour from God, therefore be humbled before God: Many of you are ready to ſay, the king and nobles and miniſters have the blame of what is in the land; but no man ſays, *What have I done?* but till every one look what he himſelf has done, and juſtify the Lord, and ſay that he hath done nothing contrary to the covenant, which is, *If ye forſake him and break his law*, he hath ſaid, *that he will chaſtiſe you with the rods of men.* I ſay, till ye do ſo, ye need not expect that your trouble will ceaſe. Remember that it was told you in the name of the Lord; ye are ready to let this word paſs by you lightly, but it ſhall find you out, and witneſs againſt you one day.

But *thirdly*, *When God hides his face*, it is the duty of his people to ſtrengthen what remains; Is there any thing left? I pray you ſtrengthen it: Go and take with you words, and though there be no more left but words, make uſe of theſe, and ſpeak ye often one to another. Is prayer left you? I pray you ply it well: Can you pray better with others than your alone? then ply it well: And whatever duty ye can come beſt ſpeed in, make it your care to go about it; whatever remains ye would ſtrengthen that; it is the will of the Lord to do ſo, if ye do it not, ye know what is threatned, Rev. iii.

Strengthen

Strengthen what remains that is ready to die, for he threatens to come upon them as a thief unexpectedly or ſuddenly.

4. *When the Lord hides his face*, it is the duty of all his people (who doing the former three) then to wait on the Lord, and expect good from him to you and to the church; *let Iſrael hope in the Lord from this time forth and for ever*: And that word, *wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your heart.* Wait, I ſay, on the Lord with courage, reflect back upon the ground of hope ye had long ſince, and ſee what ground ye had more than now: Had ye hope of the thriving of the work of God when it was low before? then what grounds of hope want ye now that ye had then? Is armies gone? is the ſpirit of prayer gone? and ſhall the hope of Iſrael depend upon theſe things? in a few men in arms? and the blowing of the Spirit? This is all our hope, we had armies in the fields whoſe rottenneſs is too viſible this day; and ſhall the ground of your hope and expectation be founded upon the blowing of the Spirit in prayer, which flowed more from the proſperity of armies and ſucceſs in other things than in any thing elſe? Did not many of you ſay between God and you, that after Alaſter M'Donald's days ye would no more be aſhamed of your hope in God? and likewiſe in the duke's days; and alſo when the Engliſh did invade the land? Then why ſhould ye be aſhamed to hope in him now?

For *Uſe*, 1. I would ye were all convinced that God is hiding his face at this time. There is no doubt, ſome think, theſe are the beſt days that ever they ſaw, but dreadful is the caſe of ſuch. Let not my ſoul enter ſurety. There be ſome that ſaith, *The ark is returned out of the land of the Philiſtines.* I ſhall ſay no more for confuting the opinions of ſuch, but this, I fear ye ſhall (ere all be done) miſs in that ark the two principle things.

(1.) The two tables of the law written by the finger of God.

(2.) Aaron's rod bloſſoming.

2. When our covenanted God *hides his face*, then turn to God, and take with the evil of your ways.

3. Be ſerious in all the titles of God's worſhip, and diligent in all theſe.

4. Wait on God and expect good from him, if ye do the former three.

Doct. II. A ſecond doctrine is. *When God hides his face, then faithful miniſters and their converts are for ſigns and wonders*; ſo much faith the text, *Behold I, and the children whom thou haſt given me are for ſigns and wonders.* David ſaith, *I am a wonder to many*, it is clear from ſcripture. In ſpeaking to this doctrine, I ſhall ſpeak to theſe things:

I. That

I. That it is ſupponed, that faithful honeſt miniſters have ſome children begotten by their miniſtry in the work of the goſpel.

II. Theſe children are the gift of God.

III. There is a mutual intereſt between the two, *to wit*, the miniſter is the parent, and his converts are the children.

IV. It is ordinary for faithful men to be put firſt to the trial.

V. Suffer the miniſter what he will, it is the ordinary lot of the honeſt miniſter and his converts to be both one, eſpecially in being made *ſigns and wonders* in an evil time.

1. Then it is ſupponed that faithful miniſters have converts ordinarily. When the Lord lights a candle there is great light. So when the Lord places an honeſt miniſter, there is ſome work there (though oftentimes they are few)

2. Theſe converts are ordinarily hid and obſcure from ſome.

3. In the time of trial they appear who are children of that miniſter, for if they appear not in the time of trial, I have no ſkill of them.

4. Theſe converts are the gift of God; and here ye would remember that a miniſter cannot convert any of himſelf, and therefore has little to boaſt of, or to glory in.

2 The people have not the miniſter to thank, they have none to thank but the great God for their converſion.

Yet, 3. It is their part and duty who are miniſters to labour, as it were, in pain to ſee if they can be inſtruments in forming Chriſt in any whom they have charge of.

4. There is a common intereſt between the miniſter and his converts, and that is,

1. In regard of *ſpiritual things*, they have one Lord, one faith, one baptiſm; and that word that edifies the people, edifies the miniſter alſo.

2. In regard of *ſympathy*, what troubles the one, troubles the other alſo; and what makes the one ſad, makes the other ſad alſo; and when the miniſter rejoiceth, the convert rejoiceth alſo.

3. As to *giving* and *taking*, there is a mutual communion of things temporal, all things are, as it were, common, the one will not have, and the other want.

4. Take notice of this, that it is moſt ordinary for miniſters that are moſt faithful, to be put firſt to *ſuffering* in an ill time, the reaſon is, becauſe they are ordinarily moſt free in diſcharging of their duty in an ill time, and that lays them open to the malice of the adverſary.

2. It comes to paſs that theſe *converts* and *children*, begotten by his miniſtry may appear and be diſcovered who were obſcure and hid before.

3. It is becauſe the Lord in his providence gives them a *thorn in the fleſh, leſt they ſhould be exalted above meaſure:* and this comes to paſs, to keep them humble: For, although the Lord has made them forth-coming for him, yet he expoſes them to ſtraits. Then it were good for all to judge oft-times as the Lord does. There is a time when God appears in the church openly, and ſhines on them, then they are honourable; and there is a time when God hides himſelf, and then they are miſerable, they are then for *ſigns and wonders.*

But the *laſt* thing in the doctrine is, That ordinarily honeſt *miniſters* and their converts ſhare of one and the ſame lot, eſpecially in being made *ſigns and wonders.*

1. They are noticed as ſtrange and ſingular perſons who trouble Iſrael.

2. They are made *wonders*, as they become the common diſcourſe of the country, and of the time.

3. They are ſaid to be *ſigns*, as to their entertainment. It uſually gives a proof of the temper of the time, according as they are dealt with; men may judge of the goodneſs and badneſs of the time.

4. They are for *ſigns*, as to their deportment and carriage, it is a clear proof and ſign that may be looked for on the church: His people they are to take God for their party in an ill time Whence ye would conſider, that there is nothing falls out to the people of God, but that which is according to the determinate purpoſe of God; there cannot one hair fall from their head without his providence. Hence it is ſaid, *They have done to thy Son Jeſus, according to thy determinate purpoſe*, Acts iv. 27, 28. and no more they could do.

1. He had thoughts of peace towards his people, come more what will, Jer. xxix. 11. *I know the thoughts that I think towards you.*——Thoughts of *peace* and not of *evil* to give you an unexpected end: Seeing the Lord has thoughts of *peace* towards his people, then it ſays, *He doth not willingly afflict his people;* therefore they are to ſearch out the ends and cauſe of affliction.

2. The thing falls out according to the purpoſe of God; the inſtruments are not the leſs guilty, and ſhall not eſcape judgment in due time: Yet it concerns all the people of God to take him as their *party*, and to ſtudy to have him on their ſide, for it is the great work that the people of God have to do.

Then for *Uſe*, 1. This ſhould compoſe and quiet the hearts of the people of God much, ſo that more or leſs cannot be done, nor what God hath determined.

2. Fix in your hearts the faith of this, *That he hath thoughts of peace towards you.* Get me the man or the woman that hath choſen him *as their treaſure hid in the field*, and has reckoned

koned him *as the pearl of price*, and valued him at the higheſt rate; they may writ for peace according to that word, Zech. vi. 13. *And he ſhall ſit and rule upon his throne, and he ſhall be a Prieſt upon his throne, and the counſel of peace ſhall be between them both*, or between them two. What two? to wit, the offices of Chriſt as King and Prieſt ſettled and fixed, and the peace of the people between them, ſo that as he can no more remove theſe two offices of Chriſt, neither can the peace of his people be removed, for they are alike ſure fixed.

3. Lay aſide your paſſion at men, go and ſecure your intereſt in God, get him on your ſide, or all is in vain. Man is not your party, but the Lord God Almighty.

DOCT. III. A third doctrine is, *Let God hide himſelf as he will, he is ay hid within doors:* For here it is ſaid, *The ſtroke is from the Lord who dwelleth in mount Zion*, he hath his abode there. Hence,

1. We would remember that the Lord dwells not in his church, as one not concerned nor afflicted with her caſe: No, no, he is ever mindful of all her concerns, and theſe that touch his people, *touch the apple of his eye:* He is concerned in the good or ill that befalls his people.

2. As long as God dwells among his people, he hath ſome work to work amongſt them, he is not there without work.

3. Though it be true that he be in the church, yet he is not tied to any particular church in the world ſince the days of Iſrael: He engaged himſelf to the people of Iſrael till the Meſſiah came, and he has engaged himſelf to return again unto them.

4. Though it be ſo that he be not engaged to any particular church, yet there is ſome church has more ground to expect his abode than others, which I take to be Britain and Ireland; and that for theſe grounds and preſumptions.

1. Becauſe I take Britain and Ireland to be a part of the ends of the earth that was given to Chriſt, Pſalm ii but beſides this, that this is the very parcel of ground he intended for that end and uſe; for the Lord did take poſſeſſion in theſe lands beyond any land ſince the apoſtles days.

2. Theſe lands have ſworn themſelves away to the Lord, moſt ſolemnly, ſignally, and frequently: Seven times has Scotland been ſworn away to the Lord, in little more than the ſpace of an hundred years. Wherein I grant theſe covenants have been broken, for which the Lord has plagued theſe lands: And as there has been no breach of covenant formerly ke this; ſo I think no plague has come like that which we may expect yet: Seeing there is a party in the land who adhere to theſe covenants, and have given teſtimony for them; and that party is counted of God for a generation or holy ſeed and

ſubſtance of the land: Then God and theſe will not ſhed yet, if they abide by theſe covenants.

A ſecond preſumption, That God will not part with his intereſt in Scotland, England, and Ireland, is this, That there was no land wherein the work of God was at ſo high a pitch ſince the apoſtles days. And do ye think that the Lord will overthrow that work? I think not.

A third preſumption is this, That according to the words of the text we preſume to ſay, the Lord is in his kirk in Britain and Ireland; and that is a good token yet, that he will help us, and that right early. The Lord is yet amongſt us.

Then for *Uſe*, 1. We are a part of the church of God, ſeeing there is ſo much of the true ordinances amongſt us.

2. Seeing God is in the church, then he is not far off; if ye will ſeek well, ſeek him therefore ſeriouſly, for he is willing to be found.

3. Though God be not abſolutely tied to any particular church ſince the days of Iſrael; yet from the foreſaid preſumptions we are not without hope that God will yet abide amongſt us, and will help us, and that right early.

DOCT. IV. A fourth doctrine is, That when a people is ſhaken out of all confidence, then their duty is *to wait on God.* And that,

1. Becauſe we are commanded ſo to do: *Wait on the Lord* is often commanded.

2. Ye would *wait on the Lord,* becauſe of the promiſe that is annexed to thoſe that wait on him, *they ſhall never be aſhamed.*

3. *To wait on the Lord,* is the moſt quieting and compoſing poſture one can light on in an ill time, *it is good to hope and quietly wait on the Lord.*

4 *Wait on the Lord,* for it has been the work of the people of God in the days of old. Pſalm cxxx. *My ſoul waits for the Lord, more than thoſe who wait for the morning*

5. *To wait on the Lord* has always a joyful iſſue, Iſa. xliii. *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, we will rejoice in him.* But, that ye may know when it is your duty to *wait only upon the Lord,* I ſhall in the next place ſhew you,

1. What proceeds or goes before *waiting.*

2. What it is to *wait,* or what *waiting* does import.

3. What follows *waiting upon the Lord.*

Firſt then, The thing which goes before *waiting,* and the duty itſelf is holden out in this chapter, *Say not a confederacy to whom this people ſhall ſay a confederacy,* that is, let not their words make you afraid, *but only ſanctify the Lord of hoſts, in your hearts,* that is, only be afraid for angering God. But,

2. Conſider there is a promiſe held out to ſuch as make God their fear, ver. 14. *He ſhall be for a ſanctuary to you.* But,

3. There

3. There is a ſad threatning pronounced on the common multitude who joined with the time, and declined therein, *He will be a ſtone of ſtumbling to them:* For in that foreſaid 14th verſe, it is but a promiſe held out to theſe that walk aright, and a threatning againſt them that comply and go wrong in an ill time. Then,

4. There follows a wrapping up of the law or ordinances among Chriſt's diſciples, or the people of God for a while. And next there follows the duty of *waiting*, which imports,

1. A terminating of the heart with an expectation only on God for their help, and none elſe, as Pſalm lxiii 5. *My ſoul, wait thou only upon God*, and upon no other thing; and it is like that word, Pſalm lx. 11. *Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man.*

2. *To wait on God*, imports this too, that their expectation is more on God himſelf, than any other thing, they expect that he will do for them by any created mean: God can give you means, but, and ye get not himſelf, it is no matter what ye get: He might ſend back your miniſters to you for a plague, and not for a mercy: Therefore plead for himſelf with them, and be peremptory, and ſay, *and thou go not with us, Lord, take us not hence, but ſlay us all here.* So I ſay, ye would plead more for the preſence of God, than for any means under heaven.

3. *To wait on God*, imports a ſubmitting to the ſeaſons of outgate, and the lot and the ordering of it; and that concerns you under the trial.

4. *To wait upon God*, imports a preſent reſolution to abide at their duty of *waiting*, ay and while he ſhew what elſe they ſhould do; for *waiting on God* is ſtill your duty when ye are in the dark, and can uſe no means for your own relief.

5. Theſe things follow on *waiting*, as it is clear from the text here.

1. Reſolve to be *for ſigns and wonders in Iſrael;* and once ye turn *waiters on God*, ye muſt reſolve to be perſecuted, mocked, impriſoned, baniſhed, and reproached.

2. There is great temptations follows *waiting on God.*

3. There will be a few public men left to preach the goſpel, or to conſult with in that dark time: He ſays, *to the law and to the teſtimony.* ye muſt make uſe of your bibles inſtead of your miniſters.

4. The manifeſt vengeance of God ſhall be on them that go wrong, that ſhall be their lot, who are in oppoſition to the work and people of God.

Then for *Uſe*, 1. Hear your duty and work in a dark time, *go and wait on God*, and pretend no ignorance; ſay not, What ſhall I do? I ſay, *Wait on the Lord*, and judge yourſelves hap-

py that the thing which is your duty, men cannot take it from you except they take your life

2. Reſolve to have temptations under that lot to cauſe you to go wrong: Therefore ſtudy to be clear in your judgment of the honeſty of Chriſt's cauſe and for that end, be well acquainted with the ſcriptures, and ye will ſee your duty there.

And *laſtly*, Believe this, that the wrath of God abides the wicked, and theſe that go aſtray from him; and all that they took pleaſure in before ſhall be made to forſake them, or be imbittered to them in that day, when the *waiters on God* ſhall come to the enjoyment of theſe things that they *waited* for. *Let us pray.*

PREFACE.

MY friends, I would aſk you, if ever you think the Lord will return to Scotland again? for indeed there are many things that ſpeak very ſad things to our lands, and declare it to be very hard to conclude, that ever he will return to Scotland again; but yet for all that, there are ſome things which ſay he will return again to Scotland, which are yet as a door of hope to us; ſo that our hope is not without good ground. And the

1. Proof, That he will return again to Scotland, are the many declarations of his mind that he hath given to his prophets and miniſters, that he will come again, and make it a glorious land with his goſpel; and his martyrs have ſealed it with their blood, and died in the faith of his return to this land: And Pſalm ii. 8 hath a reference to this, that the outmoſt parts of the earth are given to Chriſt in poſſeſſion, and for an inheritance that he may rule over them.

2. Proof, That he will return to Scotland, is, becauſe it is his land of conqueſt; Chriſt hath been at much pains to bring this land into ſubjection to himſelf; and therefore do not think that he will quit his inheritance, that hath coſt him ſo dear: Did he not take much pains upon our land by governing and guiding it? And did he not make his ſervants beſtow their ſtrength, yea, their blood upon it? And think ye that he will quit that which hath coſt him and his ſo dear? No, he will not, but will yet return and make it a glorious church and land in ſpite of all his enemies.

3. Proof

3. Proof, That he will return again to Scotland is, becauſe it belongs to him by covenant, it was a land dedicated unto him, a land which ſware allegiance and fidelity to him, for did not our fathers covenant themſelves away unto him, and their poſterity, their lives and goods, and all that they had, to be his? and ſo, Did not we all become the Lord's by formal covenanting with him? And did not we ſubſcribe that covenant, and become his by mutual conſent, and formal compact, that ourſelves and our land might be his? yea, to be his, and that on many reſpects, which can never be nullified again: So he is, our covenanted God, and therefore he will return again to our land.

4. Proof, That he will return again to Scotland, is his leaving us ſome pledges of his returning again, by his accepting of ſacrafices and teſtimonies of his people and remnants hands: For, hath he not received the blood of martys on ſcaffolds, ſeas, and fields theſe ſeveral years, and hath made them all die in the perſuaſion of it, that he will return again to Scotland?

5. Proof, That he will come again to Scotland, is this, that he is not ſetting up a pure church in any place elſewhere, for there is no land or church in the world, as yet that hath, or is like to get the wand-hand (ſo to ſpeak) of Scotland, for purity in reformation; ſo that this in humility we may ſay, that not only he hath known us of all the families of the earth, but alſo in a ſpecial manner beſides, and above all the families of the earth.

6. Proof, That he will return again to Scotland, is, the great impreſſion of it that is upon the ſpirits of his people, the moſt faithful in the land have been perſuaded of it: O then! why ſhould we doubt it, and ſince he will come again, What will he do? Anſwer, When he returns, he will let you ſee that he is come ſeaſonably; ſo then fear not, doubt not, that he will come again, for he will come and that ſeaſonably, to hold in his people's life, when all hope appears to be gone. When he appeared at Pentland, Bothwel, Drumclog, and Air's-moſs, we thought it then time, but he ſaw far otherwiſe, and has let us ſee by all theſe, that there was more need of diſcoveries than deliverances: O! what need of diſcoveries, and O! what diſcoveries hath there been ſince? ſo that we ſhall be made to ſay, he did wiſely that ſtayed. And yet we would have you perſuaded of this, that he will ſtay no longer than he ſees it fit for his own glory, and his poor church and people's profit. His coming will be a terrible coming to his adverſaries; yea, ſo terrible, that they ſhall be ready to cry, *Hills and mountains fall on us*, and hide us from an offended Majeſty, whom we have pierced with our ſins,

and

and undervalued by your lightly eſteeming of him; O ſirs! that day will be a terrible day to the wicked, *who know not God:* But his coming will be a glorious coming, for he will make his juſtice to appear and ſhine in ſuch a way that it ſhall ſcatter all from before him that are preſumptuous and unjuſt ſinners; yea all ſuch ſhall be deſtroyed; and in that day he will be glorious, and that in many reſpects; yea, the moſt glorious day that ever was ſeen here, ſhall then appear, and we long for it. Indeed we had brave days not long ſince, within the kirks; and after that we had brave days on the mountains when our Lord diſplayed a banner, and covered a table in the fields, and feaſted his people with fat things: and yet theſe days that are coming to Scotland, ſhall be far beyond any of them that ever we ſaw in the world: O ſirs! believe this, that his coming will be both ſeaſonable, terrible, and glorious; always ſirs, when he comes, he will pluck up that which is, or hath been planted, and plant that which hath been plucked up; there will be a ſtrange overturning of the wicked in that day; ſo that theſe who ſeem to have taken root, ſhall then be plucked up; and the righteous that have been plucked up by all means that the wicked could deviſe, ſhall be planted again; always ſirs, popery, prelacy, eraſtianiſm, indulgency, and profanity, are all plants that ſhall be plucked up out of this land; and in their ſtead the goſpel and godlineſs, in their power and purity, ſhall be planted in our land; and yet I adviſe you to be making ready, to meet with him in the way of his judgments. O! prepare for his coming, and pray for his coming to manifeſt his glory, although ye ſhould get a claſh or ſtroke when he comes; yea, pray for it, though ye ſhould hardly eſcape, yet if you win through in end it will be your mercy, though it be very hardly. It ſhall be a great mercy to win through the ſtorm. Let us pray, and to him be praiſe. *Amen.*

LECTURE III.

ZECHARIAH i. 18,——21.

18. *Then lift I up mine eyes, and ſaw, and behold four horns.*
19. *And I ſaid unto the angel that talked with me, What be theſe? and he anſwered me, Thoſe are the horns which have ſcattered Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem,*
20. *And the Lord ſhewed me four carpenters.*
21. *Then ſaid I, What came theſe to do? and he ſpake, ſaying, Theſe are the horns which have ſcattered Judah ſo that no man did lift up his head: But theſe are come to fray them, to caſt out the horns of the Gentiles which lift up their horns over the land of Judah to ſcatter it.*

BELOVED, here is ſhewed to the prophet a viſion; and there are two things obſervable in this viſion. The

1. Which was a very ſad ſight, and that was four horns to deſtroy Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem. And,

2. There is a joyful ſight to the godly, but terrible to the wicked, *viz.* four carpenters whom the Lord had prepared to cut off the horns or enemies of the church.

1. Then, in the general, we may obſerve here man's ignorance, and particularly the ignorance of the godly, for here it doth appear; ſo that when the prophet had gotten a ſight of the viſion, he cannot take it up until he be informed by the angel what it is. But to come to the words more particularly. In the firſt part of the viſion, the enemies of the church, in their cruelty, are called horns, by way of ſimilitude, as beaſts are ſaid to have horns, ſome for offence, and ſome for defence; ſo here by horns, the power of the wicked is ſet out or held forth. And next, if it be enquired, why they are called four, we conceive it may hold forth this much, *viz.* That the church is compaſſed about with enemies from all airths, or from the four corners of the earth: So paſſing the firſt part of the viſion, let us again, from the ſecond part of it, obſerve this:

2. Obſervation, That though enemies may inſult for a while, yet they ſhall not always triumph, but be tryſted with a change of diſpenſations; for here he ſhews the prophet four carpenters, a conſiderable viſion indeed: Hence obſerve, That he provides a ſufficiency of inſtruments to contend with enemies; for as the horns are four ſo the carpenters are four. But more particularly.

3. Obſerve, That as long as people have their eyes downward, or earthward, they cannot ſee that which might be comfortable either to themſelves, or to the church; but when they get their eyes upward, and fixed upon God, and his wiſe hand of government, then they may get a ſight that will revive themſelves and comfort others. Do you complain that you do not get a joyful ſight for yourſelves, or to make known to others, unto the church? Though it might be, if we were as the prophet was, but the canon of the ſcripture being now perfected, it cannot in that way and manner be expected; yet how can it otherwiſe be? becauſe your eyes are downward, your hearts are earthly, and while you are thus, you neither can nor ſhall ſee.

4. Obſerve, that until we be fixed on God, and get our minds ſtayed on the Lord, we ſhall not ſee thoſe comfortable viſions, or be tryſted with ſweet manifeſtations of enemies down-bringing: Though it be a caſe that is very incident to the church and people of God, to have enemies on all hands, and the nations gathered together againſt them, ſo that when one enemy prevails and wins ground on the church, then all the enemies beſtir themſelves, and join hand in hand to deſtroy her, but it ſhall not be ſo then.

5. Obſerve, That tho' he had ſeen the viſion here before, and had been informed and confirmed anent it, yet it doth not ſerve him, while he gets a new diſcovery of another viſion, but muſt be informed what is the meaning of that alſo: So you may ſee hence, That it is one thing to ſee, and another thing to know the meaning of what is ſeen; for he ſaw the horns firſt, and the carpenters next, but knew not what they were to do, until he was informed: So people or a perſon may get a viſion or manifeſtation of comfort to the church, and yet not know the meaning of the ſame: And for this cauſe, ſome may embrace a deluſion inſtead of a manifeſtation; and therefore ye have need to ſeek guiding, leading, and teaching to know theſe things and to get them applied.

6. Obſerve, That as the Lord will have them ſenſible of their ignorance, ſo they muſt imploy Chriſt, that he may inſtruct them; But people who think that they have ſkill enough of their own, and throw themſelves out of Chriſt's road and out of his hand, will not take up any thing aright; ſo then, if ye would be taught ye muſt ſeek to be informed by Chriſt, and his word and Spirit will teach you to make a right choice. O pray for this inſtruction and leading! and this would encourage you poor things, in the worſt days or times O! pray earneſtly that he would teach you.

7. Obſerve, That the Lord takes notice who are ſcattering his church and people, and will mind them for it; for ſo in this chapter, he is taking notice, both what enemies are doing,

and

and what the church is doing. Here the church was in great trouble and affliction, but the nations, her godleſs neighbours, were at reſt; and he ſaw that they helped forward the affliction of his people; for which the Lord raiſed up inſtruments to come in battle againſt them.

In applying to this, we ſhall ſpeak to two ſorts of folk that are reprovable here.

1. The firſt ſort is theſe that have directly puſhed and ſcattered Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem.

2. The ſecond ſort are theſe who have conſequently puſhed the church of God. And,

3. We ſhall ſpeak to ſome ſorts of folk that are comprehended under both thoſe ranks. And ſo we come to ſpeak to thoſe that are comprehended under the firſt rank, and may be ſaid to be directly guilty of puſhing the church and people of God.

1. The firſt ſort is the tyrant and his accomplices who have ſet out acts and laws of tyranny, contrary to the law of God, and thereby have condemned his people, and put them to death; by the execution of theſe wicked laws, theſe are directly guilty of ſcattering Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem, *viz.* the tyrant and his wicked council.

2. A ſecond ſort that are guilty of puſhing the church directly, are theſe who have put theſe wicked laws in execution, and uſed them againſt the godly, and are keeping up theſe laws againſt the conſcientious followers of Jeſus Chriſt; and have been intelligencers, and have given notice to the enemies of the people of God, where to come and apprehend them even theſe are directly guilty of ſcattering the people of God, and of puſhing Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem.

3. A third ſort that come to be directly guilty here of puſhing at, and ſcattering the church and people of God, are all theſe that obey the wicked acts of council; particularly that which was iſſued out to raiſe the hue and cry againſt the people of God; for on the matter theſe are as directly guilty as the troopers and dragoons that apprehend them.

4. A fourth ſort, are all the nobles and gentry who have made ſuch wicked laws, and countenanced and encouraged others to execute them; theſe are all directly guilty of ſcattering Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem, by concurring with the ſoldiers apprehending, taking and killing, them in the fields, and on ſcaffolds: And with theſe I may join, or reckon all your commons that aſſiſted them by your company and concurrence, in riding and running at their command; and all you that appeared againſt them any manner of way, plead what you will, you ſhall all be found directly guilty of the blood of the church of God, for you are theſe who have

puſhed with your horns of violence, you are theſe ravenous beaſts that have deſtroyed his people by your offenſive and defenſive arms againſt the church of God.

5. A fifth ſort are the wicked officers and judges that have witneſſed againſt, accuſed and condemned the people of God for their duty; ye are directly and actually guilty of the blood of the church of God: And all you who once had a profeſſion of religion, but now have helped to take and apprehend the people of God. you are directly guilty of their blood; and eſpecially the profeſſors of Edinburgh, who guarded the people of God to the place of execution, and while they were alive in guarding them alſo.

6. A ſixth ſort are all ſkippers, that had a hand in carrying away our baniſhed to other lands, or had a hand in buying, ſelling, or tranſporting them to other lands; ye are all directly guilty of puſhing the church of God with your horns. and ſhall be liable to puniſhment for it

Next we ſhall ſpeak a little to the ſecond rank, *viz* theſe who are conſequentially guilty of puſhing the church of God; and under this rank I take in all theſe:

1. Such as aſſiſted or helped enemies, by countenancing and encouraging of, or complying with them, by hearing of curates, compearing at courts, giving of bribes to their unjuſt judges; all payers of ceſs and locality, all payers of teind or ſtipends to Baal's prieſts, or whatever ſtrengthens their hands, or encourages them; I ſay, you are they who have put arms in enemies hands to deſtroy the work and people of God in this land: You have bought ſwords, guns, and piſtols to take away the life of the godly, and people of God in this land; who of you ſhall be found innocent in that day when he makes inquiſition for the blood of his people?

2. Theſe are conſequentially guilty of puſhing Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem, who have not ſided with the church againſt her enemies. And all you who have lain by in this day Jacob's trouble, and taken your eaſe, and fled into your lurking places, and have not taken common lot with the people of God, you ſhall be found guilty of ſcattering Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem, even his people in their ſtraits, that poor handful who have been ſlain in their oppoſing of ſins of all ſorts in the land; you, I ſay, ſhall be found conſequentially (if not directly) guilty. There was a ſcattering at Pentland, at Bothwel, and at Air's-moſs, where his noble witneſſes were ſlain; and how did all ly by then, yea, I fear that blood be crying not only againſt enemies that took away the lives of theſe godly ones, but it is crying againſt profeſſors alſo, for their not oppoſing and hindering what they could, the ſhedding of their precious blood; and ſay, all you who have not hindred theſe wicked practices, that have been practiſed theſe many

many years againſt the godly, you will be found to be guilty, conſequentially of puſhing the church of God; and all you who have ſuffered the church of God, or his people to be taken, impriſoned, or baniſhed, or any manner of way wronged, that you could have hindred, will be found all guilty conſequentially of puſhing Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem; ſo then firs, I fear, that the moſt part of Scotland ſhall be found guilty of puſhing at, or ſcattering the church of God, ſome one or other of theſe ways, either actually and directly, or indirectly, and conſequentially. And ſo leaving the firſt part of the viſion.

We come to the *ſecond* part thereof, and that is, The comfortable part of the church, which was the viſion of the carpenters, or a competency of inſtruments that God hath prepared againſt his enemies; ſo that if enemies be great, many, and ſtrong, Turk, pope, prelate, malignant, *&c.* yet our God, who is the *Lord of hoſts*, hath a ſufficiency of inſtruments to bring againſt them: So then, ye who are the Lord's people, would not, nor ſhould not fear though your enemies be both ſtrong and many, for he hath enough of power to bring againſt them: For here the prophet aſked what theſe came to do, and is anſwered. Whence,

8 Obſerve, That the Gentiles or Heathens, being ſaid to be the horns, the Lord raiſed up the like againſt them; ſo that be who they will that have deſtroyed the church of God, denied them their help, lien by, and have letten them ſtand and fall to themſelves, as you have heard, ſhall be found guilty of puſhing the church, and ſo will be puniſhed when the Lord brings forth his carpenters, or ſufficiency of inſtruments; and the more heatheniſh that theſe enemies have been, and are, the more cruel ſhall thoſe be whom the Lord raiſes up againſt them; then judge what the inſtruments will be who are to be ſent againſt theſe heatheniſh enemies: For go and ſearch the whole world, and you ſhall not find men of a more heatheniſh diſpoſition, for all the light that hath been amongſt them in Scotland. But no wonder to ſee poor Scotland ſo undone, for where the light hath ſhined, and hath been moſt abuſed, there is greateſt darkneſs, and ſuch become worſe than Heathens, and are worſe to be convinced, and ſo ſhall be liable to the ſevereſt of judgments, for ſcattering Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem.

6. Obſerve, That the Lord will make his inſtruments to do his work, which he gives them a commiſſion to do; ſo whatever inſtruments he employs, they ſhall be ſifted and qualified for his work; they ſhall be ſoldiers that ſhall not ſpare their lives, and they ſhall proſper; no oppoſition ſhall prevail to ſtand in their way; yea, you may believe, that the vengeance that he is about to bring on enemies will be very

ſevere,

ſevere. Theſe inſtruments that the Lord makes uſe of againſt them, they ſhall have the wind, as it were, in their wings, and the providence of God concurring and going alongſt with them in that work.

Now the *Uſe* that we ſhall draw from all this, is this.

1. That God will undoubtedly plead his people's cauſe and quarrel, upon and againſt all their enemies, and will deliver them out of all their ſtraits and temptations.

Uſe 2. is this, That whatever inſtruments the Lord makes uſe of, will be ſufficient to do his work, they ſhall be furniſhed with axes and hammers, they will have a good ready hand, and be a people able and ready to do his work, and that compleatly, ſo that no oppoſition ſhall be able to ſtand in their way, in that day of the Lord's dealing with them.

Uſe 3. is this. I adviſe you to flee out of the way of his wrath; I adviſe you to come from among them; come from among enemies, or you will ſhare with them in their puniſhments; flee therefore from them, leſt you partake of their temporal or eternal puniſhment and miſery. O my friends! quit your compliance, quit with all things that include you with enemies, for God will be about with enemies, he will be even hands with them in that day, when he appears to take vengeance on the enemies who have been theſe horns, who have ſcattered his Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem.

SERMON V.

CANTICLES ii. 17.

Until the day break and the ſhadows flee away: Turn my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.

BELOVED, there are five things that are little believed by the moſt part of this generation

1. The firſt thing that is little believed by the world, is the being of a God; and this appears by the little fear of God that is in the land. O if ye knew and believed the being of a God! ye would certainly fear more.

2. The ſecond thing that is little believed by the moſt part of this generation, is this, They believe not that there is a heaven, a place of reſt for the ſouls of the godly, or elſe there would

would be more labour and diligence to get it for their dwelling-place, and there would be more holineſs in you, and hungering after it, that you might enjoy that pleaſant inheritance that is above, where the ſervice of God cannot be interrupted nor marred by ſpiritual and temporal enemies, as it is often here below.

3. The third thing that is little believed by the moſt part of the world, and that is, that there is a hell, a place of torment, where the ſouls of the wicked go to after death, even a place of endleſs torment, where there is no mitigation of the pain for evermore. O ſirs! if this were believed, there would be more pains uſed to avoid this place, there would not be ſuch an entertaining of idols in your boſoms as there is; you would not comply with the ſinful courſes of the time as you do; there would not be ſuch compliance with theſe ſlaves of the enemy, neither would there be ſuch a running in unto ſuch, if you believed that there was ſuch a place as hell, where all impertinent ſinners muſt receive their juſt deſerts or deſervings of their ſins through all eternity.

4. The fourth thing that is not ſeriouſly believed by this generation, is this, *viz.* the certainty of death: We will all ſay that we believe this but it is but with a natural or rational faith. But, O if the ſerious thoughts of this did poſſeſs our hearts! we would be more in believing it, and more in preparing for it. O ſirs! live well, and labour to die well, for after death there is no repentance, nor returning to God in the grave, for as the tree falls it muſt lie to eternity. O ſirs! ſtrive to get a right ſight of this.

5. The fifth thing that is little believed by the moſt part of this generation, is this, the certainty of judgment. O ſirs! believe that ye muſt appear before the tribunal of God, who is, and will be a juſt and terrible Judge. Conſider when you come there, you will be either juſtified or condemned then, and there will be no excuſe admitted, neither will there be any overſight in the matters there handled, but all will be juſtly done. O labour then to be ready to meet with God in mercy, and with joy in that day of accounts! There are ſome, I believe, to whom it will be a day of joy, and a merciful meeting; but there are others to whom this will be a terrible day, even the wicked and reprobate. Oh! Oh! it will be a ſad and dreadful day unto all ſuch: But, O! it will be a pleaſant day to all true believers, and theſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus.

But to come to the words In this and the former verſes, we have the two laſt parts of the bride's ſpeech and her carriage. And here are holden out three things: (1) She aſſerts her faith or intereſt in Chriſt. (2.) She maintains this

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in the face of all oppoſers, in that expreſſion, *He feeds among the lilies.* * * *

In the words ſeveral things are contained. As,

1. By *day* here is meant, the day of judgment: We find the ſcripture ſpeaking ſeveral times of that day; as that, *of the day-ſpring from on high:* but that is meant rather of Chriſt's glorious birth, that, by way of eminence, is called *the day* or *firſt day;* but the ſecond is the day of judgment, or the day of his ſecond appearance, and that is the day here meant. It is called a *day*, becauſe it is *light* that nothing can be hidden from it; the ſublunary light muſt give place here; no candle needs to be there, no ſun nor moon need to be there; but ſuch a day it will be, that nothing can be hid from his eye. And again it is called a *day*, becauſe nothing ſhall be *dark;* there ſhall be no darkneſs to the believer in that day, all the night-ſhadows will flee away. The

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Doct. I. *That though there be many ſhadows now between Chriſt and believers, yet there is a day coming, when theſe ſhadows ſhall flee away.* And for proof of this doctrine, ſee 2 Peter i 19 Now to open this a little to you:

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then there ſhall be no ſinning any more; then ſhall this mortal put on immortality, and corruption ſhall put on incorruption, then ſhall all be changed.

2. The ſecond ſhadow that overſhadows the believer while here, and which will be taken away at that day, is, the ſhadow of *jealouſy*. Here we are often very jealous of Chriſt, for oft times we cannot ſee him acting or perceiving things as they are; when we become ſo ſuſpicious of that unſpotted and unchangeable love of Chriſt, oft-times we think he loves us not, and therefore we will not beſtow our love upon him. But, O ſirs! do not ſo, for that day that is coming, even the day of accounts, he will take away all your ſuſpicions of Chriſt's love, and you ſhall then ſee that he hath had love, and heart love too; for in that day there ſhall be no place for doubting left.

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4. The fourth ſhadow that overclouds the believer while here, that ſhall be removed at that day, is that dark ſhadow of *incapacity* to receive Chriſt, or to entertain him. O! do you not perceive this, even much of this in yourſelves? O! how feeble, how lazy, how carnal and cold-rife in commanded duties, are you? Is not his ſervice oft times a wearineſs to you? Is it not a burden to you? even as it were intolerable unto you to bear; but at that day all fainting ſhall be done away, all diſcompoſure of ſpirit ſhall then be done away, and it will become your pleaſant labour always to be taken up in the endleſs work of praiſing and wondering for evermore, and that without wavering.

5. The fifth ſhadow that comes over the believer while here, that ſhall be taken away at that day, is the ſhadow of *ordinances*; (for though they be means in his hand, and doth not hide Chriſt from the believer, but rather gives a repreſentation of him, yet it is but a ſmall and dark glance that they give of him, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. In ordinances we ſee him, but as in a glaſs darkly, or behind the wall, or through the lattice, darkly: But, O believers! at that day that cloud of

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ordinances ſhall be removed away, and you ſhall enjoy the immediate preſence of Chriſt, even of lovely Chriſt, without this ſhadow; I ſay, indeed it is very comfortable to poor things to get a ſight of him in ordinances. O! what joy have ſome of his people found in his manifeſting of himſelf in the goſpel? yea, ſometimes they have been made to cry out at them, Lord, hold thy hand, for we are but poor clay veſſels, and can hold no more. But yet, O how far below the eternal enjoyment of him is this which is had in ordinances! O ſirs! this eternal happy condition cannot be told.

6. The ſixth ſhadow that is now upon believers, which ſhall be removed at that day, is the ſhadow of *faith;* for although that be not a ſhadow which mars and hinders the believer's enjoyment, yet that noble grace is not without a ſhadow; but in that day faith ſhall diſſolve into ſight; for even at our beſt it is but a dark ſight that we get of him here by faith; for we know but in part, we ſee but in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away, and then we ſhall ſee him as he is.

7. The ſeventh ſhadow that muſt be taken away, is that ſhadow of *ſenſible preſence*, that we ſeek ſo much after. This is very joyful to believers, but O! it is but an obſcure ſight of him here, in reſpect of that which ſhall be to eternity; it is but like the night beſide the day, and ſo may be reckoned in among the ſhadows, and ſo to be done away. But O that eternal enjoyment of Chriſt! that pleaſant inheritance is preferable to preſent enjoyment, even Peter's place of ſenſible preſence: He was far miſtaken with the manifeſtation, for it made him that he would have been content, to have quit his public poſt, and public ſpirit, and to have been hid from the church for her public edification, ſo that he might enjoy Chriſt's ſenſible preſence on the mount, and yet it was but a ſhadow, in reſpect of the glory which ſhall be revealed at that day.

8. The eight ſhadow that overclouds believers, that ſhall be removed at that day, is the ſhadow of a *natural death;* they muſt all die or be changed; for then death ſhall be ſwallowed up of life. We have many ſymptoms of death by ſickneſs and diſeaſes, that draw clouds between Chriſt and us; all which ſhall evaniſh in that day, when we ſhall have victory over death, which is the laſt enemy, or the laſt fighting adverſary that the believer hath to rencounter with, but at that day it ſhall remove, and they ſhall be made to cry out, *O death! where is thy ſting? O grave! where is thy victory?* Now a

II. Thing I come to ſpeak to from this doctrine, is to ſome privileges that the believer ſhall have in that day. And,

1. The

1. The firſt privilege that the godly ſhall partake of at the day of judgment, is, they ſhall be gathered from the four winds of heaven, and from the four corners of the earth, by the ſound of the laſt trumpet. O ſirs! there is a great ſcattering among believers now; ſome are killed, ſome baniſhed to foreign lands, ſome dead in their baniſhment, and ſome dead in their impriſonment, and many drowned in the ſea; yea, ſome caſt into the ſea, when dying by the way, and ſome cruelly tortured, and their bodies quarted and put far ſundry; but at that day the Lord will ſound a gathering, ſo that not one pile of that duſt of theirs ſhall be loſt, but with theſe bodies that they endured theſe ſcatterings, tortures, or death, they ſhall appear, and be united to the ſoul again.

2. The ſecond privilege that the believer ſhall partake of at the day of account is, they ſhall then be caught up from the earth to meet the Lord in the air. O ſirs! the King is coming, the great judge is coming, he is on his way. O prepare for him! prepare to meet with him, for if you be godly, you ſhall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air with joy and gladneſs.

3. The third privilege that believers ſhall partake of at the laſt day, is, they ſhall be ſet on the right hand of the great Judge, a place of invaluable or ineſtimable honour, a place of high renown. It is true, the wicked ſhall be gathered, but they ſhall not ſhare of this honourable privilege, of being ſet at the right hand of Chriſt with his true ſheep; nor yet do we think that they ſhall be caught up at all, but ſhall remain below, and when ſentenced, ſhall go to hell, there to remain to all eternity; but the righteous ſhall have a place at his right hand, a place of honour, a place of pleaſure, and a place of delight, where they ſhall be made ſharers of that victory and triumph, and ſhall join heartily in giving ſentence againſt the reprobate, angels and men: They ſhall not then be partial; the believing father ſhall give out ſentence againſt the unbelieving child, and the child againſt the father; and the huſband againſt his loving wife, and that without any reluctancy or heſitation at all.

4. The fourth privilege that the true believer ſhall partake of at the laſt day, is, they ſhall be acknowledged of the Lord; they ſhall be acknowledged of him before his Father, and all the angels in heaven. O then, ſirs! fear not to obey him; fear not to confeſs him here below, for you ſhall be acknowledged by God, and get his approbation, and that is of more worth than if you had the applauſe of angels, and all ſaints that ever lived, or ſhall live upon the earth; for though you had theſe, if you wanted his paſs, you will not partake of the joy of being acknowledged and approven of God at that day.

5. The fifth privilege that true believers ſhall have at the laſt day, is, they ſhall be freely freed from the guilt and power of ſin. O but the believer hath many a black ſpot while here below! but at that day he ſhall be freely freed, and clearly cleared, and cleanly waſhed from all the ſpots and blemiſhes that ſin hath brought upon his ſoul, and ſhall be clothed with pure and white raiment, even the righteouſneſs of Chriſt. O ſirs! what think ye of that glorious garment that ſhall be put on you at that day?

6. The ſixth privilege that true believers ſhall ſhare of at the laſt day, is, that they ſhall be cleared, by God, of all the ſcandals and aſperſions, or calumnies that have been caſt upon them by men; for then he will rid them from all the ſcandals and reproaches they have met with here in this life: I ſay, in that day they ſhall be freely freed before all their adverſaries, and acquitted for evermore.

7. The ſeventh privilege that true believers ſhall partake of at the laſt day, is, they ſhall be kindly entertained and received by the Lord himſelf; he who is King of heaven and earth will welcome and entertain them with this pleaſant invitation, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inhereit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world.* O that glorious, pleaſant, and profitable inheritance, where ye ſhall enjoy that glorious company! and your labour ſhall be a continual praiſing of God without intermiſſion. O! who can tell what it is! O! who can ſpeak of it to purpoſe! O that ſoul raviſhing inheritance which they ſhall enjoy at that day!

8. The eight privilege which the godly ſhall partake of at the laſt day, is, they ſhall ſit with Chriſt, concurring with him in judgment, judging the world. Many unjuſt ſentences have been given out againſt the godly in this world, but at that day the believer ſhall give his conſent to that juſt and terrible judgment given out againſt the fearful diſobedient ſinners, that would not that Chriſt ſhould reign over them in this world: And at that day the love of believers ſhall be ſo great towards Chriſt, that they will concur with him in judgment, and ſhall accuſe and condemn their neareſt kinsfolk or relations according to the fleſh, and that without any reluctancy or heſitation.

9. The ninth privilege that the godly ſhall partake of at the day of judgment, is, they ſhall be invited to come and take poſſeſſion of that brave dwelling-place prepared for them from all eternity. O come and take poſſeſſion and infeftment now of your kingdom! It would but darken the glory of it to you, for me to begin to ſpeak of it; for who is able to deſcribe that holy place, the privileges of it cannot be told you; neither by angels nor ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, that are now in poſſeſſion of it, far leſs by me: I ſay, that not

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all the angels, *&c.* that have been in poſſeſſion of it theſe many years, they could not deſcribe it unto us: But we may ſay this of it, It is a reſt without a reſt; there they are for ever quit of trouble, of ſin, ſorrow, or miſery, and there they are for ever reſtleſs in giving praiſe to God.

10. The tenth privilege that true believers partake of in the day of accounts, is, their ſenſe of their happineſs, or the happy condition they are in when they think on, or ſee the wicked in torment, and find themſelves freely freed from that miſerable and woful condition that the wicked are entering into, that ſhall never have an end.

Then for *Uſe*, O ſirs! conſider what you are doing, while you have time, and while you have opportunity. O ſtrive to be made ſharers of theſe privileges! O ſeek to enjoy him!

Now, I ſhall come to a ſecond doctrine from the words, which is this:

DOCT. II. *That the hope of the day of judgment is, and ought to be, very refreſhful to true believers:* Whereupon Paul could ſay, *Dearly beloved, comfort ye one another with theſe words.* But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this, but proceed to a third doctrine, which is this:

DOCT. III. *That whoſoever are in covenant with Chriſt, they ſhall have all theſe privileges, already ſpoken of, at the laſt day applied to them.*

And from this doctrine, I ſhall make ſome uſes, to bring it home in application to you.

Uſe 1. Is of *inſtruction.* O ſirs! labour to win to the faith of this, that all the promiſes in the bible, and all the privileges of heaven, ſhall at the day of judgment, be made over unto you, even to the believer, and that to their experience in that day, when the book ſhall be opened, and all things ſhall appear as they are, naked and bare before him, when the impartial Judge will ſit, and give out ſentence, then the believers ſhall reap the advantages of all theſe privileges, to their everlaſting comfort for ever more.

Uſe 2. Is of invitation. O come and enter into covenant with Chriſt, and ye ſhall find all true we have been telling you of! And you who have ſo done, take it for your encouragement, you ſhall find that a day of joy unto you; and you who have not yet done it, be intreated to come and embrace Jeſus Chriſt upon his own terms, as he is offered to you in the goſpel, and all ſhall be well. I obteſt you, by all the joys of heaven, and by all the torments in hell, to come and embrace him: Come and take him for your God, and offer yourſelves away to him to become his people.

Uſe 3. Is of *information.* O ſirs! at that day all ſhadows will evaniſh away, and you may be informed, yea, perſuaded, that never till then they will be gone; the fleſh will war againſt

againſt the ſpirit, an unrenewed part will ſtill remain till then: So you muſt learn to ſubmit to his will in this, that you will ſtill have clouds and ſhadows, as well as ſun-blinks and fair weather.

Uſe 4. Is of *encouragement* to all the godly. O be encouraged in this! for at that day all ſhadows ſhall be gone; all your ſufferings and ſorrows, yea, all your ſinning ſhall have an end. In that day faith ſhall diſſolve into fruition, and hope into poſſeſſion, and love, that ambitious grace, ſhall be the believer's companion for ever, and that even to all the ages of eternity.

Uſe 5. Is of *comfort* to all his people who are in ſtraits and difficulties for him and his cauſe: Comfort yourſelves with this, that the day is coming, and faſt approaching, when all theſe ſhadows ſhall flee away, and you ſhall be made more than conquerors in Chriſt, or through him who hath loved you.

And now I come to the next thing in the words, *viz.* her *prayer*; and I ſhall open it a little to you: In opening whereof, many doctrines might be laid down therefrom, but I ſhall only lay down this general doctrine, that ſhall contain the ſubſtance of the whole: And the doctrine is this:

Doct. *That though Chriſt withdraw himſelf from believers now and then, while they are here, yet they ſhould not ſatisfy themſelves in that condition of his abſence, although they have the hope of their real future enjoyment of him, but ſhould uſe means, by inviting him, to get him to return to them, and to give them his preſence, and frequent manifeſtations of his love again.*

And now, from this doctrine, I ſhall obſerve theſe three things:

I. That Chriſt may withdraw from his own.

II. That they ſhould not reſt content in his abſence.

III. That they ſhould uſe means for his returning again.

I. Now in ſpeaking to the firſt, I ſhall ſpeak to theſe few cauſes of his withdrawing.

1. The firſt cauſe of Chriſt's withdrawing is, there may be ſome tranſgreſſions, or known ſins entertained in your boſom; ſome beloved luſt or idol that you will not quit with, and that may occaſion the hiding of his face: Then conſider your caſe, how rebellious you have been: How can it be otherwiſe? Think ye to enjoy his preſence, and yet entertain known ſins in your hearts? O ſirs! I will tell you, if any harbour any known ſin in your hearts, there is not a greater mark can be that you are not yet true believers. O ſirs! come and part with your ſins, quit your going to the kirks and curates, quit the wicked practices of this generation; come, quit your obeying them by paying of ceſs, and all other ſinful

ful impoſitions of one kind or other, and remove all your private and ſecret ſins, which are the cauſes of his withdrawing from you, if you would have him to return to you again.

2. The ſecond cauſe why he may withdraw his preſence from you, is your converſing with other lovers. O but this is very grievous to God! that after that he had made you to be ſenſible of your ſins, and you were reſolved to part with them, as moſt deſtructive to your ſouls, that you yet ſhould have ſought after, yielded unto, and relapſed into theſe ſins, and converſing with your old lovers again, whom you had put formerly out of doors: I ſay, O but this be grievous unto him! he will not admit of a rival, or of a lover beſides himſelf; he muſt be held as chief with the ſoul, above all others; and in the ſoul, he muſt be loved, and had in reverence beyond all others: I ſay, he muſt have all the affections of the ſoul, or elſe he will have none at all.

3. The third cauſe of his withdrawing, and going away from his people, may be, becauſe of the decay of that noble grace of watchfulneſs, which may be inſinuated in that expreſſion of *a roe and a young hart*, &c. which, as he comes eaſily, ſwiftly, and pleaſantly, bounding or ſkipping over the mountains to his beloved mate; ſo it holds out, that a little or ſmall thing will ſcar him from coming, or ſoon put him away, as is imported in that expreſſion, *that you awake him not until he pleaſe*; ſo that as he is ſwift in coming, he is alſo ſwift in going; I ſay, he will be ſwift to go; if you offend him, he will ſoon be ſtartled, and put away from you out of his place: And now, alas! what is to be ſeen in this generation, but the decay of all graces, eſpecially of that noble grace of watchfulneſs?

4. The fourth cauſe of his withdrawing, is negligence; and, alas! the more he withdraws, the more negligent ye grow, and like a cake unturned, that is cold upward, and hot downward; ſo, you are cold in the upper ſide towards God; and any heat that you have, is downward, or in the neither ſide, towards the world; for, may not this be ſeen, in that you prayed three times before, where you pray not once now? O! it is ſad to ſee the great decay of duty that is now fallen in among you; O! Sirs. get up again, and reſt not in that evil condition that ſin hath brought you to,

5. The fifth cauſe of his withdrawing his preſence, is want of earneſtneſs to be in fellowſhip and communion with God: When was it that Peter would have made three tabernacles, one for his Maſter, one for Moſes, and one for Elias? Even when he was roving, and wiſt not what he ſaid: Ay, he could have ſtayed there, and never have ſeen the church again; ſaints are never in a more dangerous condition, nor when they have been admitted to union and fellowſhip with God; I ſay,

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they are in a dangerous condition on the back of that, to fall asleep, or go wrong; for these old vessels cannot contain these fills of the new wine of heaven, but are very ready to miscarry.

6. The sixth cause of his withdrawing is, when they grow proud under manifestations: It is never a fancy like manifestation, that makes proud; it is but a carnal and vain confidence that they have embraced, instead of a manifestation, of which they were proud, and this makes him withdraw, when you misplace such ill frames and flashes, in the room of manifestations; I say, it is just with God to withdraw. O! says the man, when he wins to any flash of joy like presence, Now I am able to testify for him: you may see this made out in Peter's vain confidence, when Christ told him, That he would deny him ere long: No, said Peter, that shall not be; *Though all men should deny thee, yet will not I.* So then he confided in his present case, and gainsaid Christ, and his word too; and you see what came of it.

7. The seventh cause of his withdrawing is, when his people grow remiss in their zeal: O! Sirs, look back to your former experience, when your zeal was green and tender, was it not brave days with you then? Cannot you say something to this, sooner or later? You that ever appeared for him, was it not ay best with you, when your zeal was most, in a well-stated cause and testimony? But now, I profess, the remissness of zeal that is now sitten down on the most part of all professors, speaks out sad things a-coming on this generation; so that it is no wonder that he withdraw: for we want zeal, even that zeal which we had formerly, against defection and compliance: Ah! zeal is much blunted; O! labour to get your zeal heightned and quickened again for his glory; and the more his declarative glory is disowned, be ye more zealous for it.

II. A second thing from the doctrine was this, That when he withdraws, ye should submit, and take with your iniquity, because it is for the punishment of your sin; and be ever using the means to get him back again, and that for these reasons:

1. Because of the near relation that is betwixt Christ and his people, betwixt him and his spouse; he and she are married together; so that, although he absent himself for a time, yet you must stoop and submit to it; for it is for the punishment of your iniquity.

2. Because his love to his church is most tender, and must be made of, when he is with them, when the object is in view; and his people failing here is trysted with his drawing.

3. The usefulness of his presence; so that, when that is not made use of, he is made to withdraw. O! what is to be found

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in his abſence? Nothing but deadneſs. Hunger and pining away in iniquity and ſin: But, O! his preſence is lovely, and with him is fulneſs for evermore.

4 His preſence is uſeful; for it is ſtrengthening againſt ſin; which is oft vigorous and ſtrong againſt the poor believer. O! ſtrive by all means to attain to, and retain his uſeful preſence; for, when he is abſent, the believer is then in hazard, becauſe then he is far from his ſtrong hold; for Chriſt is the believer's ſtrong hold and high tower in the ſtormy day.

5. Folk ſhould ſeek for his return when he is abſent, becauſe his preſence is uſeful and neceſſary, to bear you company in all your afflictions, temptations and trials, and in your duties alſo. Alas! ſirs, you that can carry contendedly under Chriſt's abſence, I fear it be long ere he return, and be as a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of your Bether unto you.

III. A third thing from the doctrine drawn from the words was, To ſpeak to ſome means, which we ſhould make uſe of, in order to his return again: So then,

1. The firſt mean we ſhould make uſe of is. To ſeek out the cauſe of his departure; O! then, be diligent, be at pains for it; although for ſome time you may think you come ill ſpeed, yet ſeek ay till you find out the cauſes of his departure.

2. The ſecond mean you are to make uſe of in order to his return is this, Pour forth your ſupplications into his boſom, and never ceaſe till he diſcover ſin to you in its own ugly colour.

3. The third mean which you are to make uſe of is this, Do not continue in ſin when diſcovered, but ſee that you forſake it; if you would but give that much proof of your love to Chriſt, or that ye have love to him in exerciſe, then continue not in ſin, but forſake it.

4. The fourth mean to be made uſe of, in order to his return, is, To be diligent in duty in all commanded and called-for duty; be diligent in prayer, pour forth your ſouls in his boſom; go and weep, and watch over your practices, until you get evidences of his returning, or that he is returned to your ſouls

5. The fifth mean to be made uſe of, in order to his returning, in all your duties, is, You muſt look to him for his return, to work his own work; he muſt (as we uſe in another caſe to ſay) make the travel; all muſt come on his ſide; he muſt make you to cry, and he muſt give the anſwer; he muſt draw, and make you run; O! remember this, that he muſt do it, and none elſe.

6. The ſixth mean to be made uſe of is this, When you miſs him, do not tire, but ſeek him till you find him; when you miſs him in one duty, go to another duty: O ſirs, if you knew what the believer gets of heaven, ſometimes upon earth, you would never tire in ſeeking him, though you had a lot of perplexity and trouble while in this world: O! cry him back again, and do not reſt, nor give him reſt, until he make our Jeruſalem a praiſe in the whole earth, and remove the clouds of obſtructions betwixt him and you. Now, the uſe I would make of this is, To put you in remembrance of the former uſes: O! come, and accept of him in his own terms; come, and receive him with whom there is fulneſs for evermore: O! come and receive him; come, and behold him; come, and embrace him on his own terms, and you ſhall have fulneſs of joy, and pleaſure for evermore.

PREFACE.

THERE is a ſmall handful of you come here this night: but, Oh! in two things I am jealous over the moſt part of you: And,

1. I am jealous that many of you know not what you are ſeeking this night, and that many of you know not what end you have before you in coming here this night; I fear ſome of you are ſeeking yourſelves, and to pleaſe your curious fancies.

2. I am jealous over many of you, for this, That ye have not counted the coſt rightly ere ye came here; that you have not been reckoning what this night's work will coſt you; for, it will coſt you to anſwer before God's throne, and, it may be, before man's throne too. God will inquire at each of you, Man and woman young and old, What did you with ſuch an opportunity? What did you with ſuch a work? And poſſibly, man may either call you to deny his work, or to ſuffer for it: I believe there are few of you who have been counting the coſt, and reſolving to ſuffer by men, and preparing to anſwer to God for it; and it is even very ſtrange, that ever any people ſhould run blindly on in their duty, without knowing their end and deſign therein: However, I think it is all your duty to be here; and it is alſo the duty of them that came not, to have been here: But I think it ſtrange, when ſuch a duty as this may coſt you your heads, that you

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are not considering what you are doing. But I will tell you my friends lose what you will, or whatever hazard or skaith you come to by being here, if ye be only come to seek the Lord himself, ye shall be made up: They that are come here only to seek himself, they shall have no reason to rue, whatever happen to them, or whatever may come in their way: Seek him this night for he is a faithful God, and he will be found of those who seek him in sincerity: O! that ye were as willing to seek him this night, as he is willing to meet with you; then you would have a joyful meeting with him: My friends, if you be seeking to meet with him, he will come unto you: Let us pray, that he would raise up your spirits to seek himself.

SERMON VI.

HOSEA viii. 11.

Because Ephraim hath made many altars to sin, altars shall be to him to sin.

THE Lord hath no thoughts of peace to a people, whom he gives up to follow their own ways; when once he gives a people way in sinning, he minds next to destroy them. Why did he give Pharaoh so much way in rebelling so often against him, but that he might fit him for destruction? For the scripture testifieth, that he was raised up for this very end, that the Lord might shew his wonders upon him: O! miserable souls, whom the Lord hath no other service for, but to set them as a spectacle of his indignation: O! wretched creature whom the Lord chuseth to glorify himself in thy destruction: In effect, the Lord hath no more to do with the wicked powers in these covenanted lands, but to make them monuments of his displeasure, and objects of his justice, and that he may shew forth his wonders and power, in breaking of their power, which they, Pharaoh-like, exercise against him: In plain terms they are much worse than Pharaoh was; for we read of Pharaoh's oppressing the Israelites in their persons and estates, but not in their consciences, and he took not their lives; but the present wicked powers cannot be satisfied, except they get estates, lives consciences and all: If we would rightly delineate them, we must join Ahab and

Pharaoh together; yea, and it will not do it; for neither Ahab no Pharaoh were ſo much obliged to do otherwiſe as they are, being engaged in covenant to the Lord, and to his people; I ſay, they have the ſubjective tie, which Ahab and Pharaoh wanted: O! what can we expect upon them, but a wonderful end, ſuch as Pharaoh made, and the plumet of the houſe of Ahab to be ſtretched out upon them, and the line of Samaria upon their habitations? What means their being ſo long ſpared, but that they are reſerved for a future judgment? Mic. vi. 14. O Britain and Ireland! thy caſting down ſhall be in the midſt of thee: Thou ſhalt take hold, but ſhalt not deliver, and that thou deliverest will the Lord give up to the ſword. But to come to the purpoſe, I would ſay this, It is ſad when a people enters upon a courſe of defection from the Lord, for they are ordinarily given up to be endleſs therein; a wrong courſe is ſoon fallen upon, but it is not ſo ſoon forſaken: *Becauſe Ephraim hath made many altars to ſin, altars ſhall be to him to ſin.* This contains a threatning of Iſrael's deſtruction, with the cauſes procuring the ſame; judgments ſhall come as ſwift as an eagle againſt the houſe of the Lord, becauſe they have broken the Lord's covenant, and treſpaſſed againſt his laws, ſo that they ſhould be made to cry out *My God, we know thee;* but this flowed from the ſenſe of their calamity, and not from the ſenſe of their ſins; for, becauſe they had caſt off the things that were good, the enemy ſhortly purſued their wicked rulers, whom they did chuſe without the Lord's advice; their idolatrous courſes and ſinful confederacies ſhould not help them; though they hired lovers, yet they ſhould ſorrow a little for the burden of the king of princes, *viz.* the king of Aſſyria; for, out of juſt diſpleaſure, the Lord would give them up, to take their fill of their own ways, that they might drop ripe for deſtruction. *Ephraim made many altars to ſin, altars for idolatry;* thoſe he multiplied, and for this he is given up to follow thoſe altars, being unto him to ſin; he is accounted by the Lord, as if he had intended to commit all the ſin that is in them, ſince the law which the Lord had given him, was accounted a ſtrange thing by him: From which words *Becauſe Ephraim hath made many altars to ſin,* &c. I lay down theſe few doctrines, being the moſt ſubſtantial of the many that might be given.

Doct. I. *When people go on in a courſe of defection, they cannot be ſtaid, but, ordinarily, become endleſs therein.* Ephraim erected many idolatrous altars: and this is confirmed from the caſe that Iſrael was in, they made defection, chuſing Jeroboam without the Lord's advice: They ſtaid not there, but worſhipped the calves of Dan and Bethel, which he ſet up: they ſtaid not there, but with Ahab ſerved Baal; Oh! ſad experience among ourſelves confirms this point; for,

for, we firſt made defection, by bringing in enemies to God into places of power and truſt amongſt us; and we ſtaid not there, but the moſt part went and worſhipped the calves which they did ſet up and fabricate, *to wit*, prelacy and indulgency; and there is no ſtanding there; for the moſt part were gaping after Baal alſo, to get popery eſtabliſhed by a law. Think not this, my beloved, a wonder, that people run endleſs upon defections; for, in entering upon ſuch a courſe, they leave God, and then light and life leaves them: Now, for

Uſe 1. Of *exhortation*, To you who are following crooked ways, take heed to what ye are doing, turn you quickly to the Lord, leſt he leave off calling you; turn you quickly to him, leſt ye be given up to yourſelves, leſt he be put to this with you, to ſuffer you to chuſe your own deluſions, ſince ye have choſen your own ways; leſt he ſay of you, Let them alone, for they are joined to their idols: You that ſtand on the other ſide, give ear to this; ye that will not concern yourſelves with the work and people of God, providing ye get your own things, give ear to this; O! let ſtanders on the other ſide take heed to themſelves; for, believe this, ye ſhall not ſtand long there, ye ſhall go quickly either to the one ſide or other. We read, in Obadiah, ver. 11. how that Edom ſtood on the other ſide, in the croſs way, to cut off thoſe that did eſcape of the children of Iſrael, and did deliver up to the enemy thoſe that did remain in the day of their diſtreſs; I tell you again, ye that ſtand on the other ſide, and look lightly on the affliction of your brethren, and will not ſide yourſelves fully with the Lord, ye ſhall not continue long there: See, *The cry is gone forth from the Lord, Who is on my ſide?* And, believe it, ye ſhall be either made to declare yourſelves for him, or againſt him; for the trial ſhall come to your door, to prove you, what ye will do. Scotland hath gotten the brim of the cup of affliction; but England muſt have the dregs; ye in England have gotten a time to mind your own things; and ye have minded nothing, but how to ſecure yourſelves in peace, without truth and holineſs; but the Lord hath an alarm to ſound among you, and ye muſt either be with Michael or the dragon; there will be no halting: O ye halters, who ſtrengthen mens hands in wickedneſs, O! that ye would lay this to heart; ye think it a ſmall thing, to uphold the enemies of the work of God, and to anſwer all their impoſitions; but, when the Lord avengeth the quarrel of a broken covenant, you ſhall not be found free: And when he makes inquiſition for blood, it ſhall be found in your ſkirts: O! ye who join with all perſons that come in your way, though never ſo treacherous and unfaithful, ye would give ear to this; the Lord ſays by the kingly prophet, *Meddle not with them that are given to change:* Ye

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who have only men to follow, have a poor guide; and, in effect, it is a fault amongſt the moſt part, they plead for this man, and that man; but never a word for truth and duty.

Uſe 2 Of *exhortation*, To you who are ſtanding to your duty, keep your ground, loſe not an inch, ſeek for Moſes' ſpirit, who would not quit to Pharaoh a hair or hoof of that which belonged to the children of Iſrael: What belongs to the Lord quit nothing of it, though you ſhall all loſe the head for it: We uſe to ſay (ſpeaking in a proverb) *It is better to hold by a hair, than to draw by a tether;* a grip is ſoon ſlipt, but it is not ſoon recovored: The miniſters of Britain and Ireland, when they quit their grip, at the command of the tyrant and his wicked councellors, gave that at a word, which will coſt many thouſand carcaſes, before it be recovered; they quit that ſhamefully, which cannot be recovered but miraculouſly: I ſay, O beloved, quit nothing; for, the more you quit, the leſs ſtrength you have to hold what remains. I know one, who, by the inſtigation of one was induced to own the preſent tyrannical powers, ſo far, as to preſent a ſupplication to them; after which, he had no power to refuſe any of their demands; yea, and inſtantly was prevailed with to ſwear the oath of the *Scottiſh peſtiferous teſt:* Do not wonder at the like of this; for our outward enemies are like our inward enemies; for the more ye yield unto them, the more their ſtrength increaſeth, and yours abateth.

Doct. II. *The Lord will have ring-leaders in defection eſpecially noticed and obſerved; becauſe that Ephraim made many altars to ſin*, &c. The prophet ſays here, Ephraim, pointing eſpecially at their kingly tribe, who were endleſs in their ſinful courſes: Ye may ſee the point confirmed, Micah vi. 16. *The ſtatutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the houſe of Ahab:* You may alſo ſee it confirmed from that epitaph written upon Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, which is, *That he made Iſrael to ſin;* yea, this ſhall be the remembrance of the preſent wicked powers, to other generations, the ſo called king and councellors of Britain and Ireland, that they made theſe covenanted lands to ſin. I ſhall ſay but little to this, that ye may think the more. It is like ye will ſay, that I have preached treaſon; and if preaching truth be treaſonable, then am I a treaſonable preacher.

The uſe of the point, is, An *uſe* of *promotion:* See that ye be not followers of theſe wicked powers, who are the ring-leaders in ſinful courſes: What becomes of Iſrael for keeping the ſtatutes of Omri, and the works of the houſe of Ahab? They were made a deſolation and a hiſſing, Micah vi. 16. There are ſome who ſay, The law commands ſuch a thing, and therefore we cannot ſhun it; a brave plea indeed!

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The children of Iſrael were nothing the more excuſeable, that their abominations were ſtatutes of Omri, and the works of the houſe of Ahab: The Jews in crucifying of Chriſt ſought to excuſe themſelves, by ſaying, *They had a law, and by their law he behoved to die.* Did their law, think ye, excuſe them in crucifying of Chriſt, the Lord of glory? I will tell you one thing, if you ſtudy ſo to walk as that the laws of men may not reach you, the law of God will reach you; for they are confronted one againſt another: What think ye ſhall become of the laws of theſe times, when the Lord returns to theſe covenanted lands? Shall not they, and all owners of them, be removed? Micah vii. 11. *In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day ſhall the decree be far removed.*

DOCT. III. *The Lord judgeth a people following ſinful courſes, as if they intended the ſin that is in their way: Ephraim made many altars to ſin:* The Lord here reputes them, as if they intended all the ſin that is in their way, and in their idolatry: Many think to juſtify themſelves by good intentions; but that will not do; for, what ſaith the apoſtle of theſe, that does evil that good may come of it, but that their condemnaton is juſt? I ſay, the Lord accounts of perſons who are following ſinful courſes, as if they intended all the ſin that is in their ways; he accounts of the way of the graſſators, as if they all intended to rob him of his princely robes, and as if they intended avowed rebellion againſt him; yea, as if they intended the bloodſhed and murder of his ſaints; and as if they intended the oppreſſion of men, in their perſons, in their conſciences, and in their eſtates, and blotting out the very name of Iſrael: He accounts the ways of the prelates and their underlings, as if they intended to climb over the walls, as if they intended to teach lies, and cheriſh vice; as if they intended to murder ſouls, and to make way for antichriſt in his full ſtrength; He accounts the way of the indulged, as if they intended breach of covenant, by their dividing themſelves from the work of the Lord; as if they intended the forefaultry of their commiſſion by accepting reſtrictions and limitations from men; as if they intended altogether unfaithfulneſs, by their ſupine neutrality and lotheſome lukewarmneſs, in ſiding with and defending of ſin; yea, as if they intended the deſtruction of the work of God, and to be the authors of all our breaches: He accounts the ways of bonding miniſters, as if they intended to take upon them the favour of the enemies; as if they intended to break God's covenant, and to bind up their own hands from duty; as if they intended to declare themſelves to be more the miniſters of men, than the miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt: He accounts of the way of theſe unfaithful men in the meeting houſes in England and Ireland, as if they intended to hide ſin and duty from the poor deſtroyed people;

ple; as if they intended abominable unfaithfulneſs, and making lies their refuge: He accounts of the way of ſilent miniſters, in this day of defection, as if they intended the eſpouſing of his enemies quarrel, againſt him and his people, condemning their duty and the yielding up unto his enemies the peaceable poſſeſſion of his houſe; and he accounts of the ways of the people who follow ſuch men, as if they intended the homologation and approbation of all their courſes: He accounts the way of fine prayers, as if they intended the wronging of his cauſe, the denying of their duty, and the encouraging of men to work wickedneſs: He accounts of the way of chimney ceſs-payers, as if they intended the homologation of chimeric government, and as if they intended the upholding of a throne of iniquity, in oppoſition to this throne and kingdom.

The uſe is of exhortation; ſee then that ye walk in ſuch a way as will abide the trial of the Lord's word; ſee that ye build not hay and ſtubble, which will be devoured by fire; ſee that ye do not follow after crooked ways, leſt ye be led forth with the workers of iniquity, when the Lord ſhall bring peace to Iſrael his people: Now, that ye may win to this, I would propoſe theſe few helps to you:

1. Seek for an intereſt in Chriſt; for, while out of him, ye can neither expect light nor life: While out of him, ye can do nothing that is acceptable to him: I ſay, while you are out of him, your performances are but an abomination in his ſight.

2. Study ſtrict communion and nearneſs with himſelf, that ye may not only have grace, but grace in exerciſe, which is the only thing can bear you up in this day of temptation: O be not far from him, leſt in the day of your trial ye be far from your ſtrength.

3. Study to have a continued ſight of the preciouſneſs of the Lord's cauſe; for, without this you cannot be ſtedfaſt in it.

4. Study a conſtant willingneſs to follow the Lord's way, over all oppoſitions and through all difficulties.

5. Follow no man implicitely, leſt, when he ſteps aſide, ye be made to ſtumble and fall: Oh! implicite following of men hath been a great mean to break us; for I have not ſeen a man of any note fall away, but ſtill they have taken a fleece with them.

6. Forecaſt and reſolve upon the worſt ye can meet with, for ſuch as do ſo are moſt likely to be carried through. I ſhall ſay no more to you at the time, but cloſe with a word to two ſorts of folk:

(1.) Ye whoſe ways are not pleaſing to the Lord, and not at all approven by him, turn unto the Lord, and I am here

to

to teſtify, that he is willing to turn unto you: Come over all impediments in your way, and turn unto him, and nothing will be an impediment in his way.

(1). You who have made a right choice, ſtand to your choice, and admire him, who hath made you ſo happy, as to eſpouſe his concernments: O! admire that work of love and wonder, which will be your work through all eternity; feed your deſires upon him, and ſatisfy yourſelves in him: So, to him who is the admiration of angels, the love of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect and the wonder of the higher houſe, do we give praiſe.

N. B. *This Sermon was preached at Newcaſtle in England.*

PREFACE.

THERE is one queſtion that I would aſk at you who are come here this day, and I deſire an anſwer of every one of you; and the queſtion is this, that, in your coming here what pains have ye been at to bring the Lord along with you; I tell you, what pains have ye been at about this? Alas! I fear there be few here in this congregation, who have been wreſtling with the Lord, to get him with you to this work; I fear greatly, and I doubt not but I have many of your conſciences going alongſt with me, that ye have not been ſeeking to bring the Lord with you; for, I ſay, if ye had been conſcientious in this duty, we might hope and expect to have a heartſome meeting this day and much of the power of God ſeen in his word: If ye durſt all hold up your faces before God, and ſay, that this hath been your work, you might expect to meet him; but when you come careleſsly, it is no wonder that ye miſs him: Howbeit, my friends, I would have you conſidering, that there are many things calling you to this duty:

1. There is his commandment, Amos v. 4. *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live.* And this was David's exerciſe, Pſalm xxvii. 8. *Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.* Remember, therefore, that there is the tie of a commandment lying on you for this; and whatever the creature ſeeks, beſides the Lord, he ſeeks but himſelf therein; and therefore, whoever of you have not been at the pains, in ſome meaſure, to ſeek the Lord, to be preſent with you, in your coming here, you are to be pronounced rebels to him.

2. The excellency that is in him calls you to this: O! how excellent and precious is Chriſt! He is ſo excellent, that if all the angels in heaven had his excellency to count, they ſhould come far ſhort of it; and if all the mathematicians in the world were ſet to count his excellency, they ſhould drown in this ocean; he is ſo precious, that the moſt ſagacious creature is drowned in this depth, to find out the excellency that is in him; ſo he calls you to this work, to get him brought along with you; for, what is the matter, man, and woman, what you get, if you get not Chriſt for your portion?

3. You are to ſeek the Lord to be with you in your here-coming, becauſe one day he will ſeek an account of your here-coming: As Chriſt, after he expounded the parables, aſked this queſtion at his hearers, have ye underſtood all theſe things? Matth. xiii. 51. So remember, Sirs, that your here-coming will coſt you an anſwer; therefore ſee that ye have the anſwer before-hand.

4. The conſideration of this puts a neceſſity upon you, he calls for this from you, becauſe there was never a people under heaven in greater need of it than we are this day: For, what have we to look to this day, if we want the Lord himſelf to be preſent with us? For many of us are robbed and ſpoiled of all that was pleaſant to the carnal eye. But, what is the matter what ye want, if ye have God to be your portion, and his preſence with you? But, poor folk, if ye want God, what have ye? And, what will ye do now, when ye are coming to your Jordan? O! now ye are coming to Jordan waters, and it muſt only be his right hand underneath you, that muſt bear you up, elſe the waves will overwhelm you; alas! our vain hopes deceive us many times; for it was a great matter to get many dung off the arm of fleſh, intruſting to that party, that they would do great things for our deliverance: But now, ſince God brake that party, many are upon the contrary frame; for now they think there is no, hope and that there will never be a reviving of this work any more: Some had ſuch confidence in ſome of theſe men working our deliverance, that, I fear, ſome are at that with it, ſince our laſt daſh at Bothwel, as to ſay, with Micah, *They have taken away my gods, and what have I more?* O! believe it, ſirs, as I have oft told you, the narrow ſieve is coming; and therefore it ought to have been your work, to get the Lord to be with you; for if his ſtrength be not on your ſide, ye will never bear up, but ſink under the waves: Now, let it be all your ſerious deſire and work, to get his preſence amongſt us this day. Let us pray.

SERMON

SERMON VII.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

IF Jeſus Chriſt were ſeen to be in his church, the privileges of his people would be much ſeen and admired: O! who can tell theſe privileges? Yea, they who have himſelf, have unſpeakable privileges; for they have all his attributes forthcoming to them, in ſo far as it is for their good; ſo that they may ſing with joy that ſong, Pſalm xlvi. 1, 2. *God is our refuge and ſtrength, a very preſent help in trouble: Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea;* and put a defiance to all their enemies, with Paul, Rom. viii. 31. *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* Becauſe they have infinite love putting infinite power in execution for them: I ſay, his great love puts infinite power in execution for his people; for ſo doth Paul conclude in the forecited place, *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* And he draws this concluſion from that golden chain of ſalvation, ver. 29. *For, whom he did fore know, he alſo did predeſtinate,* &c. What ſhall we ſay to theſe things, *If God be for us, who can be againſt us?* Since he is a God of infinite love, as well as of infinite power; therefore thoſe that have him, have a ſpecial help, for he both can and will help: There are ſome friends that would help, but they cannot: But Chriſt cannot be put to a nonplus; for as he is willing, ſo he is able; and as he is able, ſo is he willing; he being with, for, and amongſt his people; is ſuch an one unto them, that they need complain for no want: They need not ſay, Who is on their ſide? Or that they are weak; for they have infinite power on their ſide, and all power in heaven and in earth ready to be put forth in execution for them, in ſo far as it is for their good. *The ſun and the moon ſtood ſtill in their habitation,* Hab. iii. 11. It was in his power ſo far to let forth theſe, or to hold them back, when it was for his people's good, in commanding the ſun to ſtand ſtill, or to go, as it might ſerve for the good of his people, in that preſent expedition of war. So, this prophet Zechariah gets a ſight or Chriſt being with his people, and engaged againſt their enemies, as you have it in the words read;

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you, &c.

Now, for better underſtanding of the words, I ſhall ſhew you the connection of them, with ſome obſervations from it. In this chapter we have,

1. A viſion which this prophet gets ſhewn unto him, ver. 1. *He ſaw a man with a meaſuring line in his hand;* this is the viſion, he ſaw Chriſt and a meaſuring line in his hand, and he aſked at him, *Whither goeſt thou?* ver 2. *I go,* ſays he, *to meaſure Jeruſalem, to ſee what is the breadth and length thereof:* Then he commiſſionates the angel to ſend forth Zechariah with this in his mouth, to tell, *That Jeruſalem ſhould be inhabited as towns without walls, and that he would be a wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midſt of her.* The obſervation from this viſion, is, That theſe that ſee the caſe of the church rightly, will always ſee Chriſt buſied and employed about his church, and concerned with her welfare; for, her welfare is the buſineſs and grand concern of Jeſus Chriſt. Here the holy prophet ſees Chriſt, not idle, but with a meaſuring line in his hand; which ſhews his care of his church, and deſign to build her: I ſay, this ſheweth his purpoſe to build her, and his care to repair her old waſtes: So this may be the church's great comfort, that Chriſt's hand is about her; he is employed about her welfare; her concerns are his concerns; and hence obſerve,

2. That he hath the ſetting of the bounds to the church; for, he hath a charter, gifted him of his Father, which no power on earth can retrench or diminiſh; for, as he hath a line, here ſignifying his purpoſe to build his church, ſo it ſignifies alſo that it is he that ſets bounds and limits to the church; and all created power cannot retrench the ſame: So, let enemies do what they can, yet they cannot leſſen the bounds of the church of Chriſt; for he hath ſaid, That he will make Zion a burthenſome ſtone to all them that weary themſelves with her; ſo, what get they for their pains, but their own overthrow and deſtruction, when Zion is made a burdenſome ſtone, that upon whomſoever it falleth it grindeth them to powder? Now, Chriſt being ſo employed, he will not have this kept up from his church, but preſently giveth comiſſion to Zechariah, to go, and proclaim what he hath to do, and to tell them what is his great purpoſe, ver. 4. Run, ſaith he, ſpeak to this young man, tell him, That Jeruſalem ſhall be inhabited as towns without walls; and this confirms what I am ſaying, *viz.* That Chriſt hath the ſetting of the bounds to his church; for he can only declare, by reaſon of the revocable decree of the Father, what are the limits of his church: But, here they might have objected, if ſo be, That Jeruſalem ſhall be inhabited, as towns without walls, then where is her ſafety?

ſafety? For, to a city without walls, the enemy can come in, and incroach upon her as they pleaſe: But, in anſwer to that, he ſaith, verſe 5. *I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midſt of her.* But then,

3. Obſerve, That one promiſe from Chriſt, and one proof of his kindneſs, makes way for another; Thus, the promiſe of enlargement makes way for the promiſe of protection; and thus he deals with his people, by making one mercy make way for another, till they get the accompliſhment and fulfilling of all promiſes; *I will be a wall of fire round about her.*

4. Obſerve, That, in the midſt of all calamities, he can reſtrain his church's enemies; for he hath a *hitherto ſhalt thou go, and no further;* he hath ſet bounds and limits, which they cannot tranſgreſs or go over; yea, he can ſo hinder enemies enterprizes, that they ſhall be as dangerous to themſelves, as it is for a man to run through the fire; ſo, the Lord makes enemies, in their deſigns againſt the church, run upon what is very dangerous to themſelves: Alſo, the expreſſion itſelf may betoken or ſignify, what the Lord was, or had been to his people, in the time of their deliverance out of Egypt; or, it may be ſpoken in alluſion to Elijah's fiery chariot, wherein he was taken up to heaven. This is the viſion, and it is applied to three ſorts of folk.

(1.) It is applied to theſe who remained ſtill in Babylon, who came not home with the reſt, to put their hands to the Lord's work; for that end it is applied to them, *viz.* That they might leave Babylon, and come home, and join with their brethren.

(2.) It is applied to thoſe who were at Jeruſalem, that they might ſing and rejoice, becauſe they had their hands about the work.

(3.) It is applied to all who oppoſe God's work and intereſt, and that, either by open enmity, or unbelief, *&c.* Be ſilent, O! all fleſh, *&c.* as to the firſt, as it is applied to them, even all ſuch as were at Babylon (for many had forgotten their native country, Jeruſalem and the temple). The commiſſion or call was, ver. 6. *Ho, ho, come forth and flee from the land of the North.* So, hence we may,

5. Obſerve in application of this, That if the advantage of Chriſt's church and people was rightly ſeen, there would be enough to perſuade all people to join hands with his people; for, ſince Chriſt was about to build his church, that was enough to invite them to come and join, to come, and put to their hands to his work and intereſt; *Ho, ho, come, and flee from the land of the north.*

6. Obſerve, That, whatever our carnal natural heart ſay to the contrary, yet our beſt is to obey his command; yea, obedience to his command is the way of ſafety and well-being

ing: For the ſhorteſt cut to be well, is to do well; which is expreſſed alſo in the word, *Ho, ho, come forth, and flee out of the land of the north:* O then! would he ſay, give obedience to his commands, as you would flee ſome great hazard; or, as you would flee from a man that is going to kill you.

7. Obſerve, that a people may come to ſuch a length of ſtupidity, as even at length to ſit down contentedly under that condition, which formerly they would have thought a plague: For, once this people could not think of going to Babylon; but when come there, they ſit down cloſe and ſtill, and cannot think of a return. But, O! this is a very curſed diſpoſition, when people ſit ſtill under the ſad tokens of the Lord's diſpleaſure; as if he had ſaid, The Lord, in his diſpleaſure, hath ſcattered you, why will ye ſit ſtill, when he opens a door of relief unto you? O what a judgment-like diſpoſition was this, for them to be under this ſad calamity! as if he had ſaid, You would be content to live under this calamitous condition ſtill, without his temple-worſhip, and temple preſence; but formerly it was not ſo. Long ſince it would have been thought a very ſtrange thing, to have a peaceable life, when and where ſin was abounding; but now the moſt part would be content to have outward peace, without his preſence in the worſhip. O then, what a judgment is this! But, to enforce this exhortation, there are two reaſons here implied; and,

(1.) It implies God's anger, to have ſcattered them already; Why will you ly ſtill, ſince my anger hath ſcattered you, and put you in that caſe?

(2.) That their profeſſing to be of Zion, ver. 6. ſhewed that it was very unlike to Zion, to dwell in Babylon; *Deliver thyſelf, O Zion, that dwells at Babylon.*

8. Obſerve, that if profeſſors would notice their privileges and profeſſors they would find much in them; the Lord names them here, *Zion*, to ſhame them out of it, ſo that he would either have them to quit the name of Zion, or quit their place in Babylon. But, to come to the words read, Chriſt is here inſtructing the prophet, in theſe words, *After the glory*, that is, After that the Lord had viſited his people with affliction; or, after he had manifeſted his glory in delivering his people, then he ſent Chriſt to them that had puniſhed his people, and hindered them to build his temple; and the reaſon of this is, Becauſe Chriſt was ſent to puniſh the Babylonians; therefore it was very unſuitable for them to dwell among them. I grant there is ſome difficulty in theſe words, *After the glory:* but this will exhauſt the full meaning of it:

(1.) If we underſtand it thus, *After the glory*, that is After he

he had afflicted his church and people; for by glory is ſometimes underſtood his church, Iſa. iv. 5.

(2) If we underſtand it thus, *After the glory*, that is, After the Lord had begun to manifeſt his glory, in reſtoring his glory, or his church, then he was ſent, that he might reſtrain them from hindering his work and intereſt's ongoing. And this he doth for his tender ſympathy that he bears towards his church. *After the glory hath he ſent me to the nations that ſpoiled you; for he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* In the words there are five things.

I. Chriſt is held forth to be the declarer of his Father's will; for he tells unto the prophet what the Lord is ſaying.

II. Here is held forth Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeing the Father's will done; *he ſent me to the nations.*

III. Here is ſet forth the time of it, *viz. After the glory he hath ſent me to the nations*, that is, after he had viſited his people with afflictions, and reſtored them again.

IV. Here is the cauſe why he is ſent, and that is, to puniſh them becauſe they ſpoiled his people: And,

V. Here is the reaſon why or the motive, from which he is moved thus to do; and this is brought from his own affection towards his people, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* And now,

I. From the firſt of theſe that Jeſus Chriſt is here making known the Father's will; let me lay down this doctrine from it, *viz. That Chriſt Jeſus is the interpreter of the Father's will and he is the revealer of his counſel;* for it is he, I ſay, that declares to the prophet what the Lord ſaith, John xiv. 26. *But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things.* Col. ii. 9. *For in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the godhead bodily.* Col. i. 19 *For it pleaſed the Father that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell.* He teacheth the will of his Father, he is that wiſe Solomon, who is the teacher and inſtructor of his people: So then, let me lay home this with a word of uſe: Is he the inſtructor of his people? Then come and make him your teacher; he will teach you to profit; he can teach you effectually; for he will teach his people by his word and Spirit. (I mean not that ſpirit of deluſion, which enthuſiaſts and quakers lean upon, ſeparating the word from the Spirit.) If you inquire, What doth Chriſt teach his people? I anſwer,

1. He will teach his people what ſin is, he will not teach to commit ſin, for that is of the devil; *but he will reprove the world of ſin*, John xvi. 8, and teach you to know how hateful a thing ſin is, by giving you a right uptaking of it.

2. He will teach his people the miſeries that accompany ſin, *He will reprove the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment*, John xvi. 8. You have been taught this, that ſin

makes

makes a distance betwixt God and you, betwixt God and the creature. Know ye not, that sin casts out of God's presence into hell? Have you been taught this, to see sin casting into hell out of God's presence, and arming God against you, to pursue you with the sword of his justice drawn in his hand? Hath he brought you to mount Sinai? Whether or not, know you this what it is to dwell at mount Sinai, and what it is to be brought up a while at Moses's feet? I fear, the most part of you do not know what it is to be brought up a while at Moses's school, at the foot of mount Sinai; for he usually leads to mount Sinai, before he leads to mount Zion. O! this is an untender generation, that ventures upon sin against light: But, I must tell you, we have not been killed at Moses's school; I tremble not so much to think upon the gross defection and compliance of the land, as I do, when I remember that the most part of the land is sinning against light. I heard it reported of one man, who on his death-bed was under something of this exercise, unto whom a minister came; and he, seeing that there was some pins of the tabernacle loosed, told him his case, and that the sword of justice was hanging over his head; whereupon the sick man cried out, This man hath killed me: To whom the minister replied, I have not killed you; but the two tables of the law have killed you. O! know ye what it is to have the two tables of the law killing you? They kill all them whom Christ quickens again: Paul knew what it was to be killed by the law, and to live by the gospel. This is the thing I am saying, Christ teacheth his people to know sin, and the misery that attends sin; and if you were trained up at this school, there would be more tenderness among you; you would know that it is a bitter thing to depart from the living God He was an honest man who said, I could embrace hell in mine arms, rather than sin.

3. Christ will teach you in whom your help is; he will not take you to Moses's school, and kill you, and leave you there; but he will shew you that help is in himself; you have destroyed yourselves, would he say; now I will teach you that you are no more destroyed, for I am sufficient to help you; O! come unto him, and he will teach you to know his power and love, and to know these meeting together in him for your help. O! these are sweet lessons to be taught to see infinite power, and infinite love joining hands together for your help, by taking the poor creature by the hand, taking it out of justice's way, and teaching it to flee to the city of refuge, that the avenger of blood may pursue it no more.

Would it not be a sweet lesson for a man, bound up in prison, all hope of outgate being cut off, if a prince should come and say, I will tell you how you shall come out hence; take

take a grip of me, and follow me, and you ſhall eſcape. And now, O undone creature! come here, and Chriſt ſhall teach you his all-ſufficiency, that he is a complete Saviour; he will teach you the boundleſneſs and freedom of his grace, and that he is a glorious and coſtly Saviour, and a communicative good.

4. He will teach you effectually, Jer. xxxi. 33. *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*, &c. ſo he will teach you, and make you take with the learning; he will teach you effectually and with a high hand, not by compulſion, but by a holy conſtraining and overpouring; he teacheth by enlightening the mind, and quickening the will, and moving the affections to embrace Chriſt as he is offered in the goſpel. O! ye that are ignorant of this, come ye now; for now he is offering himſelf, and teſtifying how willing he is to have this leſſon taught you; he is ſaying, Behold me, behold me: O! then, who hath eyes now to ſee Chriſt an all-ſufficient Saviour?

5. He will teach you to know the advantages that his ſcholars have; his ſchool is a ſchool of great advantages; the ſchool of Chriſt is a ſchool of peace and joy; no trouble is there; but there is no peace to the wicked; but unto his diſciples he ſaith, My peace I give you, my peace I leave you: O! then, would you have a life of peace in a time of trouble, and would you have joy in the time of trouble? O! then, come to Chriſt's ſchool; for true peace and true joy cannot be had elſewhere: O! had you the advantages that his ſcholars have, and the manifeſtations that they have of himſelf, you would think that they only had the advantages, who are at his ſchool: O ye who have ſtood long out, come and ſubmit yourſelves to him, for he is willing to receive you, and he will not upbraid you. But there are two ſorts of folk, who will not come and be taught of him:

1. The conceited folk according to that which the apoſtle ſays, *The world by wiſdom knew not God*, 1 Cor. i. 21. You have ſo much wit, that you think you need no more. O for humble ignorance! a ſenſe of ignorance would be a preparative to you for Chriſt's teaching. Zech. iv 5. *Knoweſt thou not what theſe be? and he ſaid, No, my Lord;* he would have folk humbled under the ſenſe of their ignorance, before he would teach them; for he receives a confeſſion of the prophets ignorance, and then teacheth him: Chriſt knew well enough that Zechariah was ignorant, but he would have him give a confeſſion of it, that he might ſee and have the ſenſe of it: So, there is a company of conceited folk, that will not confeſs their ignorance, as the proud Phariſees who ſaid, Doſt thou teach us? Yea, there are ſome amongſt you, that will be ready to ſay unto Chriſt, Doſt thou teach us? There is

ſo much worldly wiſdom amongſt you, that Chriſt hath no place.

2. The ſecond ſort is unwilling folk; unwillingneſs hinders ſubjection to Chriſt in his prophetic office, John v. 40 *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* What makes you ſo unwilling? Ye will ſay, that Chriſt is an auſtere maſter, I dare not come: But, believe it, he is no auſtere maſter, Iſa. iv. 23. *A bruiſed reed ſhall he not break, and the ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench.* He is a maſter eaſy to be intreated; but ye will poſſibly ſay, That his diſcipline and learning are very auſtere: But, I tell you his leſſons are very pleaſant leſſons; and the more ſharp that they appear, that is but to make way for more pleaſant leſſons, know alſo moſt of the pleaſantneſs of them. In his teaching you ſhall have that which is ſufficient for you; his ways are all pleaſantneſs, and his paths are all peace: O! then make yourſelves acquinted with this; then may ye ſet to your ſeals to this, Faithful is he that hath promiſed, who hath ſaid his ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and his paths are paths of peace.

II. I proceed to the ſecond thing which was obſerved, *viz.* That Chriſt is ſent to ſee the Father's will executed, *After the glory hath he ſent me,* &c. ſo Chriſt here inſtructs his people as a prophet; now he is ſent to ſee the Father's will executed on the nations. We will not get this point now handled, as need would require; only we ſhall touch it but a little, and obſerve this doctrine:

DOCT. *Chriſt Jeſus hath not only a peculiar ſufficiency over his church, but he is governor of heaven and earth, over nations, to rule and cruſh them as he pleaſeth.* Pſalm ii. 8, 9 *Aſk of me, and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion. Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel.* Dan. ii. 44. *And in the days of theſe kings ſhall the God of heaven ſet up a kingdom which ſhall never be deſtroyed, and this kingdom ſhall not be left to other people, but it ſhall break in pieces, and conſume all theſe kingdoms, and it ſhall ſtand for ever.* So then.

1. Here you ſee him ſent to the nations, to cruſh and puniſh not only in a particular manner, as Lord of his church; but he is ſuperior over all nations: It is true, Chriſt hath a peculiar ſuperiority over his church; for, as Mediator, he hath a peculiar intereſt in her, which engageth him to be much concerned with his church; and hence learn this uſe from it, that they are in a miſerable condition or caſe, to whom Chriſt is ſent for their overthrow, and not for help; to whom he is not ſent with glad tidings, but to puniſh and cruſh them: and when he goes againſt ſuch a people, that,

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in Pſalm l. 3. is made out againſt them, *our God ſhall come and ſhall not keep ſilence; a fire ſhall burn before him, and be very tempeſtuous round about him; and*, Heb. xii. ver. laſt, *our God is a conſuming fire:* Then is not their caſe ſad, againſt whom Chriſt is coming as a conſuming fire? The apoſtate powers of this land are little thinking of this, that Chriſt will be among them, and make them feel it to their coſt and experience. They carry their heads very high now, whom Chriſt will break; for as he hath a ſcepter to ſway over his people, ſo alſo he hath a rod of iron to break his and their enemies. O! then ſubject yourſelves unto him; for miſerable is the caſe of this generation, who have broken all ties and vows, or engagements to him; The wicked carry now too high; but when Chriſt comes to give them a blow, it will be a weighty blow indeed.

Uſe 2. Wherein learn the woful caſe of thoſe, whom Chriſt cometh to deſtroy: Obſerve this is an uſe of great encouragement and concernment; I ſay, it is an uſe of exhortation, to draw you from among enemies. Believe it, ſirs, theſe who are found among enemies, when Chriſt comes to puniſh enemies, they ſhall taſte of enemies cup: *Ho, ho, come forth, and flee, becauſe for judgment I am come againſt the Babylonians?* and if ye be found in Babylon then you ſhall taſte of Babylon's cup. Believe it, I ſay theſe who ſhall be found in enemies camps, in the day of his appearance for his church, and againſt her adverſaries, ſhall certainly ſhare of enemies judgments; and there are ſix ſorts of folk that will be found in the enemies camps.

1. Theſe who are making peace with enemies; they are making a covenant with hell, and with death; but God will come and break theſe: Then theſe that will not go and join with you, and proclaim war againſt them, ſhall be broken. You who are making peace with the wicked, who are ſaying, ye will never more own him, nor his way; remember that peace-making with them ſhall bring you down, and bring wrath upon you; and your covenant with hell and death ſhall not ſtand, but be annulled. O! then conſider how you are venturing upon the boſſes of the Almighty's buckler; it is eaſier to venture upon the wrath of men than upon the wrath and great diſpleaſure of a living God. O! then, let ſuch take heed to themſelves, what they are doing; for their covenant with hell and with death ſhall not ſtand.

2. Theſe who uphold the enemies. People think it a ſmall thing now, to contribute for the upholding of enemies, by paying ceſs and locality to them; but remember what Paul ſays, Rom. vi. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are to whom ye obey?* I would have you believing this, that, ſince ye yield yourſelves

to enemies in their ſinful impoſitions, the Lord will reckon with you, as them that are ſubjects to enemies when he comes to puniſh them, and then you ſhall be made to taſte of the enemies cup.

3. Theſe who are juſtifying enemies; unlike to David, who ſaid, Pſalm ci. 3. *I hate the work of them that turn aſide, it ſhall not cleave unto me:* Men venture upon juſtifying of enemies, and they juſtify them, when they do what they do, and in that inſtance; when they pay fines, they juſtify enemies, ſaying, That the enemies have been right, and they themſelves wrong. O! deliver yourſelves from this, for this inſtates you in the camp of enemies; deliver yourſelves from them, for I tell you, theſe that are found in Babel, when God puniſheth Babel, ſhall be partakers of Babel's lot. Believe me, when he gives enemies a blow, he will not miſs them a blow who juſtify enemies: Alſo he will not miſs a lukewarm people, ſwearing one day to the Lord, and the other to Malcham; one day coming here, and another day going to the perjured curates, or other hirelings: So, I ſay, ſuch as do not follow the Lord fully, will be found guilty in that day; and if ye will not believe me, take the Lord's word for it, Zeph. i. 4. 5. *And I will ſtretch out mine hand upon Judah — and them that worſhip, and that ſwear by the Lord, and that ſwear by Malcham; all theſe will the Lord puniſh:* Take heed, now, ye who are halting betwixt two opinions; as it were, in ſomething worſhipping God, and in ſomething ſerving idols; ye will be cut off. O halters! take heed, and be admoniſhed to deliver yourſelves; for, if ye be found halting between two opinions, God will repute you to be in Babylon.

4. Theſe will be found to be in enemies camps, and puniſhed with them, who are not zealous againſt Babylon, that ſtir not up themſelves againſt her, Judges v. 23. *Curſe ye Meroz,* (ſaid the angel of the Lord,) *curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty:* Meroz, lying by from this duty, brought a heavy curſe from God on themſelves. A weighty curſe is that, *Curſed is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully,* Jer. xlviii. 10. and curſed is he that doth the work of the Lord negligently; ye ought to hate all with a perfect hatred, who are haters of God, Pſalm cxxxix. 21, 22. This is clearly to be underſtood, againſt and concerning the practices and ways of the wicked: So, then I would warn you to deliver yourſelves from an indifferent and lukewarm frame, elſe God will find you in enemies camps; for, if there be not a zealous reſentment againſt what enemies are doing againſt the people, cauſe and kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he may juſtly charge the wrongs done by them againſt us, on

you.

you. If all that the enemies are doing be not reſented, with heart and practice, I ſay, he may charge it home on you and us.

5. Theſe will be found in enemies camps, who are turned back from following the Lord, Zeph. i. 6. And them that are turned back from the Lord, you who have made apoſtacy from your former profeſſion and practice, from former vows and engagements, when all have been founded upon and conſonant to the ſcriptures of truth, which is the word of God; if ye do not remember from whence ye are fallen, and repent, and do your firſt works, ye ſhall be found in Babylon, when the Lord comes to puniſh you with them; for he will deſtroy them who have turned back from following the Lord; many of the people of this generation think to get ſafety and ſecurity in the world, by turning from following of God; but, believe it, God ſhall make his diſpleaſure againſt them ſadly appear: Remember what is ſaid, Iſa. xxxi. 2. *Yet he alſo is wiſe, and will bring evil, and will not call back his words, but will ariſe againſt the houſe of evil doers, and againſt the help of them that work iniquity:* There was many a wiſe politic one in Iſrael, who thought to ſtrengthen themſelves, by joining with the enemies of God; but the Lord tells them, this was a covering that was not of his Spirit, Iſa. xxx. 1. And, in the forecited place, he adds this word, *Yet he alſo is wiſe*, &c. ye think, forſooth, would the prophet ſay, that ye are wiſe men; but God is more wiſe, and knows how to out wit your wiſdom: God will out-wit this worldly-wiſe generation; and the ways which they have taken for peace, ſhall bring down great trouble and deſolation from the Lord upon them: the only way to *be well* is to *do well:* It ſhall be ſeen, that theſe who have laid aſide the Lord's work, whether miniſters or profeſſors, have caſt themſelves into inevitable calamities; for the Lord will not ſuffer ſuch ways to paſs without puniſhment, and evidences of his diſpleaſure.

6. Theſe will be found in enemies camps, and may expect to be puniſhed, as ſtrangers and enemies to God, who have not ſought the Lord, nor enquired after him; for whatever ye are, and whatever you profeſs yourſelves to be, if ye be found ſtrangers to God, ye ſhall meet with Babylon's puniſhment: So then, remember this, that Chriſt will make no difference, betwixt theſe who are ſtrangers and them that are enemies; they ſhall both meet in end, they ſhall both be found in one camp, they ſhall be found in one company thro' all eternity; if mercy prevent it not, the wrath of God ſhall ſeize on them to all eternity: O! then remember this, you who are ſtrangers to God, and know him not, ye ſhall drink of the enemies cup; for ſuch will God hold to be one with Babylon, when he comes to puniſh Babylon.

Uſe

Uſe 3. Learn hence the happy caſe of all theſe, whom Chriſt comes to help and encourage; as they are miſerable he comes to deſtroy, ſo they are happy whom he comes to help, Zech. ii. 10. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midſt of thee, ſaith the Lord;* So. theſe that are ſetting about the work of the Lord is calling them unto, are hereby invited to ſing, and to ſhew their joy by ſinging; for Chriſt was coming to them, not as to enemies, to deſtroy and puniſh, but to help and comfort them, and to take up his habitation amongſt them: *Sing, and rejoice; for lo, I come, and will dwell in the midſt of you:* It is obſervable, and very emphatical, that it is put in the preſent time, or future, *I will come*, and it holds out the perpetuity of it, as that, in his coming, he is always in the preſent time, coming; and it holds out alſo the increaſe of it, and it points out his being at all pains, to make up an union betwixt his people and him: And now, my friends, Chriſt is offering to make up a bargain with you; he is offering to come to each of your ſouls, young and old; *Lo, I come*, ſays he; I will be at all the pains, to make up an union betwixt us, and to come unto you. Are they not in a happy caſe, then, whom Chriſt comes thus unto, whom he comes unto, taking pains upon them, to make up an union betwixt him and them? Now, what is your anſwer? is this your reply, *Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus?* But, I fear, many of you are ready to reply, with the ſwiniſh Gadareans, *Depart out of our coaſts.* O! dare any of you give this reply when he is preſenting himſelf unto you? You will ſay, *Who comes?* I anſwer it is Chriſt, a glorious King, no mean perſon, a glorious and compleat Saviour: O! then, let this be your hearts out-cry, *Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

PREFACE.

I NEED not aſk this queſtion at many of you, What hath brought you here this day? For, I am afraid, that the moſt part of you know not your errand: I will tell you what the coming of the moſt part that are here will produce.

Firſt, It is a diſhonouring of Chriſt, and a wounding of him.

Secondly,

Secondly, It is a haſtning many of you to perdition; Chriſt had a word to his diſciples; That he had choſen twelve, and one of them ſhould betray him; but, I fear, he ſhall have it to ſay of this company, that of each twelve eleven ſhall betray him: I will tell you, your coming here ſhall either be a great mercy, or a great judgment, to many of you; ye are ſo unlike the duty of the day, and ſo little of the work of the day to be ſeen among you: There is ſuch unfittedneſs, and ſuch idle diſcourſes to be found amongſt you, which makes me ſadly to fear, that the effect of this day's work will be ſad to many. Alas! ſhall he cover a table in the wilderneſs, and ſhall he ſpread forth his net where there is ſo many fiſh, and ſhall nothing be catched? O! take heed what ye are doing, and what a jewel the goſpel is, that ye have in your offer: I believe there are many here, who ſhall have this day's work as an article of their indictment, when it will be aſked at them, what improvement they made of ſuch a day. O! what would they do, who are in hell, for the leaſt opportunity that we have had, and undervalued it? O! it is ſadly to be feared, that the Lord be provoked to draw his table from among us, becauſe we improve it not.

Let us pray, and cry after him, for a blink of his reconciled countenance to ſhine on us this day.

SERMON VIII.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

THE Lord's coming to a land hath different effects, upon different ſorts of folks: He comes to his church in peace, but to his enemies in red-war; he comes to his church with garments of ſalvation, but to the enemies of his church with garments of ſeverity; ſo that his coming is joyful to ſome, but terrible to others. I fear it would be a pleaſant doctrine, that would go well away with many, to tell you, That there is not a God to call you to an account, and to aſk you what you are doing: I ſay, this would go well away with the

moſt

moſt part of you; for his coming will be a terrible coming to the moſt part, though indeed it will be a joyful coming to his own: But his coming, as it ſhall dart terror to the hearts of his enemies; ſo his appearance is joyful, and much longed for by his own people. But, to come to the purpoſe, in the foregoing occaſion, we ſhewed the connection of the words, with ſome obſervations from the connection; which obſervations I cannot now reduce; for the time will not allow me to do it: However that I may come to the words themſelves; and, for your better underſtanding of them, conſider the connection of them thus. In the beginning of the chapter there is a viſion ſhewn to Zechariah: The viſion is of a man, *to wit*, Chriſt, in the prelude of his human nature, with a meaſuring line in his hand; and being aſked by the prophet, Whether he was going; he ſays, *To meaſure Jeruſalem, to ſee what is the breadth, and what is the length thereof.* Now, by the meaſuring line in Chriſt's hand is repreſented unto us, that he ſets bounds to his own church, that all the powers on earth cannot intrench, or retrench, or diminiſh: Let them bend in or out their forces, yet they cannot incroach upon the bounds which he hath ſet: This was ſo comfortable to the church, that Chriſt preſently poſts away the news of it; and an angel gets a commiſſion to tell it; *Run*, ſaith he, *tell this young man*, to tell the people, *That Jeruſalem ſhould be inhabited, as towns without walls;* he gives promiſe of enlargement to his church, that her borders ſhall be enlarged, ſignified by the multitude of inhabitants; and he gives another promiſe of ſafety, that this promiſe of enlargement might be made out, becauſe there might be a ſecret doubt, *to wit*, That if Jerſalem ſhall be inhabited as a town without walls, where ſhall her ſafety be? then the enemies may come in as they will: To prevent this, he tells, *That he will be a wall of fire round about her:* So this is the viſion, and the meaning hereof, which is applied to two or three ſorts of folk.

1. To thoſe that remained at Babylon, when the reſt of the Jews came home, and builded the temple: There was a company of them that remained at Babylon, and were content with their judgment-like condition; but he applies this to them, to encourage theſe who had their hands at the work. O! beloved, if ye had eyes to ſee, ye would ſee Chriſt's hand always about the work: This exhortation is inforced by three reaſons, whereof two are more darkly ſet down, *Firſt*, ver. 7. *Deliver thyſelf, O Zion, that dwelleſt with the daughter of Babylon.* And ver. 6. *I have ſpread you abroad as the four winds of heaven, ſo then haſten out of Babylon*, becauſe their being there was an evidence of his diſpleaſure. *Secondly*, Since they pretended to Zion, therefore it was unſeemly for them who were

were profeſſors, to dwell among enemies. And, *Thirdly*, the third reaſon is in the words read, which he inforceth the exhortation from; becauſe, the Lord having afflicted his people, and now is beginning to manifeſt his glory. Chriſt is ſent unto the nations; and ſo then, who can hinder his work? Therefore it is not ſafe for them to dwell among them; as if he had ſaid, I am ſent to puniſh the nations; who are my enemies; and if you be in their camps, when I come to puniſh them, you ſhall taſte of their cup: Whereby is meant, that he made a deep reſentment of the wrongs done unto them by enemies; alſo, that he hath a great ſympathy with, or towards them, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye:* And their judgment is held forth or told them in the following words, where the manner of it is ſet down, ver. 9 *For, behold I will ſhake mine hand upon them, and they ſhall be a ſpoil to their ſervants, and ye ſhall know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me:* That is, Theſe whom they had conquered ſhould be lords over them again: By which he would make it known that he was the Lord's meſſenger to his church: And ſo I ſhall return again to the words, in which I noticed five particulars.

I. That Jeſus Chriſt is the interpreter of the Father's will.

II. That he is ſent to ſee the Father's will executed.

III. Here is pointed out the time when, to wit, *After the glory*, that is, after he had afflicted his people, or viſited his church with affliction; which is his declarative glory, and where his glory begins to be manifeſted, in helping them out of their low ſtate and caſe, and bringing them back to their own land, and ſetting them to work again.

IV. There is the cauſe why, *Becauſe they had ſpoiled his people.*

V. The reaſon, to wit, *He that toucheth you*, &c. The reaſon is taken from his ſympathy with his people. Now, the firſt particular was ſpoken to a little, and a doctrine laid down, which was this: *That Jeſus Chriſt, as he hath a ſuperiority over his church and people, ſo he is Lord over all, and governor of heaven and earth.*

And now, I come to lay down a ſecond doctrine from theſe words, which is this: *That Chriſt being ſent to ſee the Father's will executed, as he is Lord over all, ſo he is the Father's meſſenger to his church.* And for clearing of this, conſider what is ſaid, Mal. iii. 1. *And the Lord whom ye ſeek ſhall ſuddenly come to his temple, even the meſſenger of the covenant,* There he is called the meſſenger ſent from the Father, to theſe who were ſeeking him: Alſo remember, Zech. ii. 10, 11. *Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo I come, and will dwell in the midſt of thee, ſaith the Lord: and many nations ſhall be joined to the Lord in that day, and ſhall be my people,*

and I will dwell in the midſt of thee, and thou ſhalt know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me unto thee: There are many other ſcriptures that hold forth this alſo, as Gal. iv. 4, 5. *But when the fulneſs of the time was come, God ſent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of ſons:* So, there is the reaſon wherefore Jeſus Chriſt is ſent to his church, *to wit,* To redeem them from under the condemning power and ſentence of the law, and advance them to the privileges and advantages of the ſons of God: It is clear alſo from what Paul ſays, Gal. iii. 13. *Chriſt hath redeemed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us; for it is written, Curſed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* As it is clear here, that Chriſt redeems his people from the ſentence and condemning power of the law, by being made a curſe from them; ſo it is clear alſo, that he is ſent to his church, that he may advance to the privileges of the adopted ſons of God, all his own children, Eph. i. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf.*

Now the ſecond member of the doctrine was, *That Jeſus Chriſt is the Father's meſſenger to the enemies of his church;* and, for proof of this, call to your remembrance what was ſaid by David, Pſalm. ii. 8, 9. *Aſk of me and I ſhall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion: Thou ſhalt break them with a rod of iron, thou ſhalt daſh them in pieces like a potter's veſſel.* It is likewiſe clear from Dan. ii. 45. For the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands, that is mentioned there, that brake in pieces the iron, the braſs, the clay, the ſilver, and the gold, is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in his kingdom; for he is that King that ſhall break through and daſh in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, even all the kingdoms of his enemies; and for that purpoſe he was ſent: Likewiſe it is clear from the words of our text, After the glory hath he ſent me to the nations, *&c.* there he is particularly commiſſionated, but in different reſpects; for he is ſent to his people, to redeem and deliver them from the ſentence of the law, and from the ſtroke of juſtice: But, he is ſent by his Father to the enemies of his church, to get the law executed againſt them, and to ſee juſtice ſatisfied upon them: He is ſent of his Father to his people, to advantage and advance them in the privileges of adopted children; but he is ſent to his enemies, to paſs ſentence of excluſion from his preſence, and all the privileges which his people are privileged with, againſt them. His coming to his people joyfully, but his coming to his enemies is very terrible and dreadful, Matth. xiv. 25. His diſciples being near to periſh, he came unto them walking on the ſea, treading on the waves agitated with the wind: This ſight it troubled

troubled the disciples: But they were soon quieted and composed, by our Lord's coming: Even so, when Christ comes to deliver his church, he tramples his enemies under his feet, as mortar is trodden: O! then, what sad days will the powers of this land meet with, when Christ gets a particular message to tread them under his feet, when he is sent to break those, who have been the rod in his hand, and to cast the staff into the fire? but, I suppose, that which is said, may have occasioned this question: May all of you say, O! how shall I know if Jesus Christ be his Father's messenger, to save or destroy, to relieve or not relieve me from the sentence and condemning power of the law? Answer, for solution in this, take these evidences following:

1. If so be that Christ come to you, to deliver you from the condemning power of the law, then you will find Christ dwelling in you, and you dwelling in Christ, John xiv. 20. *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you;* to wit, when he should send the comforter, the Holy Ghost; then they should know that they were in him, and he in them; so then, these whom he comes to save, have him dwelling in them, and they in him O! can ye find yourselves dwelling in Christ by faith and love, and him dwelling in you by his word and Spirit? It would take up more time than now we have, to tell over the enemies of your dwelling in Christ by faith and love: However, I shall give you some evidences, whereby ye shall know if Christ be dwelling in you by his word and Spirit; and if ye find the one, ye may know the other, that is, if you find him dwelling in you by his word and Spirit, ye may know by this, that you are in him by faith and love; for the two are reciprocal, according to the forecited place; and so, what proves the one, proves the other also; and by what means ye know the one, ye may know the other also: So, I say, if so be that Christ dwell in you by his word and Spirit, you will find them dwelling in you: This is his promise, John xv. 6 *If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.* There it is clear, that his word abides in his people; and that his Spirit also abides in his children, is clear, from 1 John iv. 13. *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* Now, if he dwell in you by his word and Spirit, ye will find his word and Spirit dwelling in you, for your direction, John xiv. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.* So then, do you find God's word and Spirit directing you, and leading you? if it be so, Christ is come to you for your deliverance from under the curse, and condemning power of the law: But, Oh! I fear the most part of you does not know

what it means, to have his word and Spirit for your direction; but rather ye are led by your fancies and luſts, and know not what it is to be taught by his word and Spirit; but, believe it, where he comes with deliverance, there he dwells, leading, teaching, and directing his people by his word and Spirit, and if ye knew what this meaned, ye would be far from obeying the doctrine of men, contrary to the doctrine which his word and Spirit teacheth: ye would diſobey all tyrannical power, coſt what it will: So then, believe me, Chriſt dwells by his word and Spirit, teaching and directing them in whom he dwells.

2. When his word and Spirit is, he convinceth them of their ſin and miſery, and loſt condition, John xvi. 8. *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin,* &c. O! ye that have not the conviction of your loſt caſe and condition, or of your ſinful ſtate. in a humble way and manner, ye know not what it is to have Chriſt dwelling in you by his word and Spirit; for, where he dwells by theſe, he convinceth of ſin and miſery; The word of God is ſharper than a two edged ſword; and it is like a hammer, to break the rocks in pieces. O! the Spirit of God is a ſpirit of conviction and compunction: and all ye who can run on in ſin without remorſe, ye have reaſon to ſuſpect that Chriſt dwells not in you. It is like many will ſay, I have ſundry checks for ſin, and convictions; but I fear few of you know what is required of you, to have the Spirit's conviction of ſin; it is not an ordinary check of conſcience, and away again; nay, it is ſuch a conviction of ſin, as hath a deep ſenſe of ſin going alongſt with it; and it leaves not the man, till it beget a loathing and leaving of ſin; for, as it begets a ſenſe of ſin upon the ſoul, ſo it begets hatred and forſaking of ſin: So then, never tell me that the man's convictions can be real, where his ſin is not hateful to him, and forſaken by him: I wonder what this generation can be thinking, who are confeſſing ſin, and yet falling into it every day: Surely, unto ſuch God hath not given the promiſe of mercy; for, that is, to ſuch as confeſs and forſake ſin: So then, if ye ſhould confeſs your ſin every hour, and yet ſtick to it, ye need not think to be the better, nor to expect mercy out of his hand; yea, all ſuch confeſſions ſhall make your bonds the ſtronger. It is but a mocking of God, to confeſs, and not forſake ſin.

3. Where Chriſt dwells by his word and Spirit, there he dwells as with dominion and prevalency over the creature. His grace in you, or his Spirit, will not dwell as an underling; it will have a kind of dominion, 1 John iii. 3. *Every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.* Eph. vi. 12. *We Wreſtle not againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt prin.*

principalities and powers, &c. I ſay, ye will find his word and ſpirit wreſtling againſt theſe, and ſometimes conquering theſe and bring them ſenſibly under ſubjection. It is ſtrange, what people can mean, and what do they deem, who can have peace of conſcience, when yet their ſin is prevailing, yea, reigning over them? for where the Spirit of God is, it will not live as an underling, 1 John iii. 9 *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin:* This not ſo to be underſtood, as if they did nothing that is ſinful; for the ſad experience of the ſaints proves the contrary: But I will tell you, how the child of God may be ſaid not to commit ſin; as,

(1.) They cannot ſin of ſet purpoſe; they dare never ſay unto God, that purpoſedly they trampled upon his revealed will.

(2.) They cannot ſin willingly: It is true, they may be overcome; but yet there is a party within them, that doth not yield; the unrenewed part may yield and prevail, but it never carries alongſt with it the conſent of the regenerate part; ſo then the child of God never ſins with the whole will.

(3.) Such can never ſin wittingly; ſin is not the child of God's element: for there is a warfare kept in them, and that keeps the regenerate part from taking delight in ſin, but cauſeth grief for ſin; but you who have no grief for ſin, but take delight in it, you have reaſon to ſuſpect and queſtion your adoption. If one ſhould caſt a ſheep into a puddle, it would not ly there, though a ſow would delight therein; even ſo, it is not the element of the children of God to dwell in ſin; for, when they ſin, they go out of their element.

(4.) The child of God commits not that ſin unto death; whatever he doth, he cannot commit that ſin, and will have a diligent ſtudy to recover out of ſin, when they fall into it, and a care not to ſin again. Indeed I wonder what people are doing or thinking, who can ſin ſo, as in their ſinning there is neither fear of ſin, nor a care to be kept back from ſin again: But believe it, where Chriſt dwells not as an underling, his word and Spirit hath always a commanding power. Try then yourſelves by this; for, albeit ye ſhould tie yourſelves to him by a thread of profeſſion, ſo long as you pleaſe, yet, I ſay, if his word and ſpirit dwell not in you, by a ſort of predominating power, you know not what it is to be a kindly ingrafted member into him who is the true vine, nor a member in that root; for that root will not admit of ſuch a gangrane rotten member; for theſe who are true members of Chriſt, receive vital ſpirits from him; and wherever he dwelleth, there a motion is kept up againſt ſin; but theſe who are tied to him by a profeſſion only, have not this vital ſpirit in them; yea, I fear, that I may ſay this of the moſt part of you, who will not care to adventure to follow the

courſe

courſes of the time, and go into that idolatrous worſhip, and receive thoſe men as meſſengers of Jeſus Chriſt, who are blaſphamers; and whoſe hands are full of blood. But where Chriſt is, there he is by a prevailing power; his word and Spirit dwells and reigns there: But as for ſuch that can ſin againſt light, his Spirit lives too much undervalued-like, if he be there at all

4. Where Chriſt dwells by his word and Spirit, there is a ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication given them, according to that word, Zech. xii. 10. *And I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication.* Amos v. 4. *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live.* Now then where Chriſt dwells, his Spirit is a ſpirit of grace and ſupplication: I wonder what folk can think, who know not what it is to call on God. O! what can prayerleſs folk think, that know not any thing of his Spirit dwelling in them? Pſal. xxvii. 8. *When thou ſaidſt, ſeek ye my face, my heart ſaid unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek.* Ye who neglect prayer, and ye who ſeek not the Lord's face, ye know not what it is to have the Lord's Spirit dwelling in you; and, whatever ye think of this evidence, it is a holding one; for whom God calls, he ſtirs them up to call upon his name, as it is in that foreceited place: There the Lord calls, ſeek ye my face; and the man who is called, anſwereth, *Thy face Lord will I ſeek.* O then! prayerleſs folk, I ſay ye are void of grace, and of Chriſt and ye know not what it is to have Chriſt dwelling in you. I now proceed to the ſecond part of that evidence, how it may be known by you, if Chriſt be come to ſave or deſtroy, to redeem and deliver you from the condemning ſentence of the law, or to execute the ſentence of the law againſt you. And,

1. If he be coming to deliver you, then you will find a deſire after Chriſt, Iſa. lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters.* Ye ſee who they are that are invited to come to the waters; it is thirſty folk not ſuch as ſtand in ſome need of drink, but ſuch as are ſenſible of thirſt: So, thoſe whom Jeſus Chriſt is come to ſave, they have a deſire after Jeſus Chriſt; and, believe it, it is ſuch a deſire only as is after himſelf, Pſalm lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth I deſire beſides thee:* Nothing will ſatisfy the pſalmiſt but Chriſt himſelf: he cares for neither heaven nor earth, but for Chriſt; yea, he vilipends heaven, conſidering it abſtractly from Chriſt. So, believe me, friends, you that know not what it is to have your deſire after Chriſt himſelf, more than after any other thing, ye know not what it is to have him coming to ſave you. ——O! awaken out of ſecurity, and reſt not ſatisfied with

your

yourſelves in that condition; for, remember the promiſe is made to them that diligently ſeek him. But you who know not what it is, to have your hearts panting after him, ſlightering and thirſting after him, and have your deſires more after other things than after him, Chriſt is not yet amongſt you, ſo as to come and ſave you: So, ye muſt belive what the apoſtle ſays, 1 Pet. ii. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious*: Yea, believe me, were he precious to you, your deſires would be more after him. O how do ye value him, ye who never had, your deſires rightly and ſeriouſly going out after him! Surely, ye have no eſteem of him ſince your deſires goes not out after him; ye care not for him. O! what ſhall I think of this Chriſt deſpiſing generation, that cares not for Chrſt and his glory, whether it ſink or ſwim; whether a tyrant upon a throne wear his crown or not upon his head? whereas, right deſires after Chriſt, and a right eſteem of him, and a ſenſe of his precioufneſs, would keep them from thinking on that but with indignation, even that Chriſt ſhould be robbed, ſpoiled, and diveſted of his royal robes, by theſe worms of the earth, by wretches, yea, by the worſt of men. O! ye that care ſo little for his glory, and what belongs unto him, and that whereby he makes himſelf known, there is no evidence that he abides in you,

2. If he be come to deliver you, as Chriſt will be precious himſelf to you, ſo what he hath will be precious alſo, Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2, 3. There David puts a high eſteem upon the man that is pardoned, he is even the bleſſed man, that is made partaker of this mercy Have you a high eſteem of pardoning mercy? Remember all theſe whom he makes partakers of ſaving mercy, he makes them know what that mercy means, he gives them a high eſteem of that mercy. But Oh! I fear many of you never knew what that mercy was, or what it was to have a continued ſerious thought or deſire after mercy. Oh! the world gets more of your eſteem, than Chriſt's pardoning mercy; for the world and your luſts get more of your affections than his pardoning mercy does. But the man or woman to whom God extends his mercy, are they who put a high eſteem on this mercy. Indeed, the world thinks them fools that ſeek after this mercy, who ſeek after pardoning and preventing mercy; but David acknowlegeth them wiſe folk, ſaying, Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſin is pardoned, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile; albeit that people who are ſeeking after pardoning grace, expoſe themſelves to be looked upon by the world as fools. But yet, I tell you, and a wiſer man than I, even David, tells you, and not only David, but the God of truth by David tells you, Pſal. xxxii. 1. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered.* How, beloved, if ye would put a high eſteem on mercy, you might

might have mercy; for, whatever the world think of it, it is an evidence of the ſoul's getting mercy, when a high eſteem is put upon mercy.

3. If he be come to deliver you, you will find this as a third evidence of it, that ye will find in yourſelves a holy jealouſy and ſuſpicion of yourſelves, that you are not in Chriſt: Paul ſays, *Examine yourſelves, prove yourſelves*, &c. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. He uſeth reiterated exhortations, to put them to the work; intimating not only the diligence that they ſhould uſe, but alſo the difficulty of it; and why is their need that examination and probation be uſed by them in whom the Lord works this work, but becauſe there is a holy jealouſy in them? Paul was jealous over the Corinthians; yea, all ought to be jealous over themſelves, and theſe who judge not themſelves God will judge. I like not that faith which is from the cradle; ſuch as ſay, they never doubted, or never wanted faith, have reaſon to ſuſpect themſelves; for many are the doubts of believers; and indeed a holy ſuſpicion evidenceth faith. Ye may think this a ſtrange word, but it is a ſure one, becauſe it evidenceth this that the poor creature would fain have faith; and a deſire after grace evidenceth grace. They would be ſo perſuaded of grace, that they cannot get ſure enough grips of Chriſt and his grace; they would be ſo ſure, that this makes them even to queſtion and ſuſpect themſelves, leſt they deceive themſelves.

4. The fourth evidence is (and take heed to it) if he be come to deliver you, ye will find much ſatisfaction in the way of ſalvation, even in that noble device that ye would not condeſcend to go to heaven any other way, though there were another way poſſible (which yet is impoſſible). For, ſuppoſe one ſhould come and bring this doctrine with them; yet the ſoul, where Chriſt dwells by his word and Spirit, would reply thus, Let me be out of heaven, before I go there any other way, than in and through Chriſt, that he may get the glory. I ſay, the creature in whom Chriſt is, and whom he is coming to ſave, will ſee much of God's will, and much of his attributes, meeting together in this work, that they will rather be denied to heaven, ere they would go to it another way: They ſee his juſtice with mercy ſo ſhining there, that, before he had wanted a remnant of Adam's loſt children, the Father would rather quit for a while with the Son of his love; and there is ſo much glory to be ſeen there, that, before in their way of ſalvation God be not glorified, they would rather be denied to their part of heaven; and they ſee this work to be ſo pleaſant to the whole Trinity, that is made pleaſant to them: For, what makes it ſo pleaſant to believers, but becauſe the Trinity hath taken ſuch delight in it? 1 John iv. 9. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe*

God

God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: And, what moved him to that but his infinite love! O! then is not that a pleaſant work, that proceeds only from a motive of love? and what greater love could be manifeſted than that, that he would part (ſo to ſpeak) with his expreſs image?

Now, as this work was well pleaſing to God the Father, ſo likewiſe it was to Chriſt, John xv. 13. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* And if it had not been pleaſing to Chriſt, he would not have endured his Father's diſpleaſure and indignation. Was it not love that made him to come in the fleſh, and ſuffer ſo many contradictions of ſinners, that made him to wander up and down, ſuffering ſo many natural yet ſinleſs infirmities? O! was not this a pleaſant work, that moved him to undergo all this? Yea, Chriſt ſo loved this work, that many times before he actually came in the fleſh, he tried how he could act on the ſtage of man's fleſh. He appeared oftimes to our Fathers under the Old Teſtament diſpenſation, as to Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, and to the prophets, in viſions, and to this prophet with a meaſuring line: And, what was all this for, but to let us ſee how he delighted in this work, to become fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone? I ſay, he tried how that would fit him; and as it was pleaſant to the Father and the Son, ſo it was pleaſant to the Holy Ghoſt; hence is that word, He ſhall teſtify of me. When Chriſt was baptized, the Spirit deſcended on him like a dove, and it was voiced from heaven, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him.* And as this is and hath been ſuch a pleaſant work to the Trinity, ſo alſo it is made a delight to the ſoul that hath root in Chriſt; ſo that that ſoul would not be content to be ſaved another way, than that way, becauſe it is ſo glorious a way; and if you are not win this length, you are not without ſelf's reach. A perſon who would be content to be ſaved and to go to heaven by works, or any other way than by Chriſt, knows not what it is to have Chriſt in him. Though ye ſhould weep never ſo long. It is but a heaven ye build up to yourſelves; it is not Chriſt, it is but ſelf-ſeeking, and ſelf-deſtroying, if ye ſeek ſalvation that way. But whom he comes to ſave, this work of ſalvation through a Redeemer, becomes ſo pleaſant to them, that it is the joy of their heart. Now let me lay this home upon you, by a word of exhortation; and, O! that he would prepare you for it: Therefore, gird up your loins, and anſwer to it.

Then, ſince Chriſt is the Father's meſſenger, to ſave ſome, and to deſtroy others, would ye be ſaved by him? Would ye be delivered from the condemning power of the law? O! then come ye unto Chriſt: he is ſpreading forth his arms,

and calling you to behold him: O! come unto him a crucified Saviour, who endured ſuch things for our ſins, and who ſhall deliver you from the ſentence of the law, and the threatning of the wrath of God that hangs over your heads. O! come, and let nothing ſtand in the way of your coming: Believe it, no mountain ſhall ſtand in your way on his part. O! whatever doubts or objections ye have, come forward with them. It may be, ſome may ſay, My ſin is a great mountain; but, O ſinner! be thy ſin what it will, come to Chriſt; tho' thy ſin reach to heaven, yet his mercy is above the heavens; yea, though each one of you had all the ſins of this meeting, yet, I ſay, come unto Chriſt there is enough in him, who is that fountain opened for the houſe of David, and inhabitants of Jeruſalem; for ſin, and for uncleanneſs: So, then, let not this ſtand in the way; for the greater thy ſin be, the greater mercy ſhall be manifeſted in pardoning it: And thy greateſt ſin ſhall be from henceforth, in refuſing Chriſt's call this night; yea, it ſhall be greater than all your other ſins, that ever before ye have committed. If ye refuſe him now, on the matter, ye ſay, he is a liar, and mock him.

But it is like ye will object, and ſay, That ye have broken vows, reſolutions, and covenants, that ye have made to him formerly. I anſwer, Poor ſinners, let not this ſtand in the way; hearken to Chriſt's call, Jer. iii. 14. *Turn, O backſliding children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married unto you, and I will take you, one of a city, and two of a family, and will bring you to Zion,*

But it is like, that ſome will have this ſtanding in the way of their coming, I have ſlighted many offers and calls, and will he now accept of me? I tell you for as oft as ye have ſlighted the call, yet he is willing to embrace you. Then, come; now is the ſeaſonable time; were he not willing, he would not have ſent you this call on the back of ſo many. O! be inſtructed you who have ſitten ſo many calls, to come now, and I tell you your former refuſals ſhall never be mentioned againſt you; and whatever doubts ye have yet, if for the preſent ye cannot get them ſolved lay them by, and come and take Chriſt Jeſus. That was a noble way that Abraham took; he had doubts that he could not ſolve, and therefore he laid them aſide; he conſidered not the deadneſs of Sarah's womb; that was a doubt that he could not win over, therefore he laid it aſide. Believe me, ye who will not come unto Chriſt, ſhall have no excuſe from this night forward; for, whatever ſtands in the way, ye may lay aſide, and come to Chriſt and partake of his ſalvation; and I will tell you in ſhort what an one he is, that you muſt come to.

1. He is a glorious Saviour, whoſe glory is made to ſhine in what he hath done, in purchaſing ſuch mercies for ſinners; and

and this was voiced from heaven, when he came to the world, *Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, and good-will towards men.* So then, he is a glorious Saviour; for he hath manifeſted his good-will, and his glory, in the ſalvation of his people. All the works of God are written, back and fore, with his glory: Sun, moon, and ſtars, and theſe clouds that are there, are all written over with his glory. But not one of his works hath ſo much glory written on it, as this work of man's redemption hath.

2. He is a wonderful Saviour: it is the work and exerciſe of ſuch as are above the clouds to wonder at and admire him. O! he is an ocean of wonders! wherein all the inhabitants of that higher houſe are ſwimming. It is ſaid, Rev. viii. 1. *There was ſilence in heaven about the ſpace of half an hour* They were ſo ſtruck with amazement, when they looked on Chriſt, he was ſo great and glorious, that they were made to be ſilent in wondering; they wiſt not how to expreſs themſelves.

3. He is a complete and an all-ſufficient Saviour, Hoſ. xiii. 9 *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf, but in me is thine help;* ſo he is completely able to help you out of your loſt caſe and condition. He is completely able for conferring pardoning grace, for juſtifying and ſanctifying his people; he is able to put you out of Satan's claws, and out of the fetters of a dead and hard heart; and will not this provoke you to come unto Chriſt?

4. He is a free Saviour; for all, who are here this night, young or old, men or women, may have Jeſus Chriſt, if they pleaſe this offer of him, which is of free grace. O! then, now come unto Chriſt, who gives away himſelf without money and without price. O! now come and embrace him, ſince he hath a heart to the bargain; and it is a free offer made unto you, that he may be come a Saviour unto all of you, he gives himſelf without money and without price, Iſa. lv. 1. There Jeſus Chriſt ſeeks nothing for this ſalvation which he hath offered but that ye would take it off his hand. O hard-hearted ſinner! who will not put forth your hands, and take this offer out of his hand.

It is a coſtly ſalvation to him; it coſt him to endure heavy ſufferings; it coſt him to ſweet drops of blood in the garden; it coſt him to undergo heavy fighting under the wrath of his Father; yea, and the ſhedding of his precious blood: And yet it is a cheap ſalvation to you; ye ſhall have it for putting out the hand. And will ye go away, and fall back from ſuch a market this night? If ye do, I ſhall be a witneſs againſt you, that this night Jeſus Chriſt and his ſalvation have been in your offer; and although I ſhould never be partaker of this ſalvation, yet I ſhall be a witneſs againſt you: And I take all here witneſs againſt you; yea, I ſay, I ſhall be a witneſs againſt

you all, that will not partake of this offered ſalvation through a ſlain Saviour.

Now, by the love of Jeſus Chriſt unto, and for ſinners, and by the joys of heaven, and by the torments of hell. I obteſt you, to embrace Jeſus Chriſt; otherwiſe I declare irrevocable war againſt you: And to his name be praiſe.

PREFACE.

MY friends, there is one thing that I would have you to believe, and it is this, that the Lord is coming to ſet up his throne of juſtice in Scotland; and the time is near, and I will give you theſe evidences of it:

Firſt, The greatneſs of the enemies power, and the greatneſs of their iniquity; their power is very great, and they will never get all their will accompliſhed; their purpoſe indeed is to blot out the name of Iſrael out of the land; but that they will not get accompliſhed, although they have accompliſhed very much cruelty: Howbeit the greatneſs of their iniquity ſpeaks forth the nearneſs of the judgments that are coming on this land; for the greater they be, the nearer is their fall. It is the Lord's ordinary way of procedure, to let his enemies be very ripe, before he thruſt in his ſickle to cut them down: Now, they are declaring rebellion againſt heaven, and avowedly belching out blaſphemies againſt God's holy name; and now, though many think that God is keeping ſilence, yet he will not always keep ſilence, but will come.

2. The lowneſs of the work: Many think this a ſtrange evidence; yet it is true for his way of dealing with his work and people is always to lay them very low, and then to deliver them in the day of their extremity; and the low caſe that his work and people are now in, ſays, that his coming is not far off; and this is an evidence of it, that he is manifeſting his diſpleaſure againſt his enemies already, by dividing their tongues and languages by writing many perſecutors childleſs, by taking many of them at unawares out of this world; and theſe private calamities are fore-runners of ſad judgments coming upon them; for particular calamities are fore-runners of univerſal judgments; as the flying roll, entering into the houſe of the thief, and the falſe ſwearer, Zech. v. 1, 2, 3, 4.

3, 4. ſignifies, that the very timber and ſtones of their houſes ſhould be conſumed. All that is now in ſight is but like ſpittings of God's wrath before the ſhower come on.

But what ſhall I ſay to you who are here? I am greatly afraid, that his coming with judgments to the land, will be a very terrible coming to the moſt part of you: The enemies look to be ripe for cutting down; and indeed ſo does the moſt part of you too. Would ever it have been thought, that God would have taken ſo much pains upon a people, by wonderful mercies and judgments, and yet ſo little of the fruits of his pains to be ſeen, ſo little ſenſe of ſin, and ſo much concernedneſs with the deſolations of his church, and the diſhonour that his name gets in the land? O unconcerned people! God is coming, and his coming will be a terrible coming; his coming will make the moſt ſecure of you to ſhake; I would have you to think upon this, and to lay it to heart, and ſee how ye will meet with him. O! who will ſtand before his face, think ye, before a ſin revenging God, coming to take vengeance on guilty people for the diſhonour that his name hath gotten? Let us pray unto him, that he may prepare us for a meeting with him, and help us to take warning in time.

SERMON IX.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

BELOVED friends, they make a right choice who chuſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than judgments with his adverſaries; for the Lord afflicts and chaſtneth his people out of love; but he plagues his enemies with wrath and indignation. He, by the afflicting of his people, doth purpoſe their correction and amendment; but, by puniſhing his adverſaries, he purpoſeth their overthrow and deſtruction. The afflictions of his people are light and momentary; but the judgments of enemies are heavy and everlaſting; they may begin in time, but eternity ſhall not put

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an end to them. The affliction of his people turns to their glorification; but the puniſhments that enemies meet with here, are but fore-runners of the wrath of God, that they are liable to, and ſhall meet with to eternity.

But to come to what remains in the words, ye may remember, (at leaſt ſome of you) how I ſhewed you the connection of the words, which in ſum was this, There is here a viſion, repreſented to the prophet, *viz.* Jeſus Chriſt, with a meaſuring line in his hand, whereby is ſignified his purpoſe of building his own church, and ſetting bounds to her: And hereupon he gives an angel a charge, to give Zechariah a commiſſion, to declare the meaning of this viſion to the church, which was, that the church ſhould be enlarged and poſſeſſed, *as a town without walls*; and alſo, to make her mercy complete, he promiſeth to the church ſafety and protection, *I will be a wall of fire round about her.* And this is applied to ſeveral ſorts of folk: For,

1. It is applied to thoſe that remained at Babylon, and deſerted the work of God, and their brethren; and is made uſe of as a call to them, to come and join with their brethren, in building the houſe of God. Here they are exhorted to flee from Babylon, and from the land of the north, and to deliver themſelves out of it, as from ſome eminent and great judgment: And there are three reaſons made uſe of, to enforce this exhortation.

(1.) The firſt, which is couched up darkly in the 7th verſe, *Deliver thyſelf, O Zion, that dwelleth with the daughter of Babylon*; and in the 6th verſe, *Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, ſaith the Lord; for I have ſpread you abroad, as the four winds of heaven, ſaith the Lord:* Yea, the reaſon is this, ye ought to flee out of Babylon, becauſe ye were *ſcattered abroad*, as an evidence of his diſpleaſure; and therefore ye ſhould not be content to ly in that caſe, whereunto they were caſt in anger; come forth, flee, for I have ſpread you abroad in mine anger.

(2.) The ſecond reaſon is, becauſe they have had the name of Zion, it was very unſeemly for them that profeſſed his name, to dwell in Babylon.

(3.) The third reaſon is in the words read, becauſe he was coming to puniſh enemies, therefore it would be very ſad for them to be found in enemies camps. This is enlarged in the following words, verſe 9. *For, behold, I will ſhake mine hand upon them*, &c. Their judgment is pointed out, to be both ſad and ſudden. It will be a very ignominious ſtroke; for their very ſervants ſhould become their maſters. The words were divided into five particulars.

1. That Jeſus Chriſt is the faithful interpreter of the Father's will.

2. That

2. That he is ſent of the Father, to ſee his will executed on the nations.

3. The time, *viz. after the glory*, that is, after the Lord had viſited his people with affliction; or, after his glory was manifeſted, in the begun reſtoration of his people, which is his glory: Then Chriſt was ſent to puniſh their enemies.

4. There is the *cauſe* why he is ſent to puniſh the nations, and it is, becauſe they had ſpoiled his people.

5. There is the reaſon, moving him to this, which is brought from his ſympathy with his people, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* The firſt particular was handled, and the ſecond a little touched, wherein I ſhewed, that as Jeſus Chriſt is the Father's meſſenger to his church, for their redemption and ſalvation; ſo he is the Father's meſſenger to his church's enemies, for their overthrow and deſtruction: And he being employed as the Father's meſſenger to puniſh the heathens, is uſed here as a reaſon to inforce this exhortation, that is given unto the Jews, that they ſhould come and leave Babylon, becauſe he was coming to puniſh the enemies of his church; and therefore it was very hazardous to be found in their camps: And ſo he exhorts them to flee from Babylon, as they would flee from a great plague and eminent judgment. And now, I lay down this doctrine.

DOCT. *That it is very unſafe for the church of God to be found in enemies camps, or living under their ſhadow, in the time when the Lord puniſheth his enemies; leſt they be made partakers of their judgments.*

This doctrine I confirm from 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. "Where-"fore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith "the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will re-"ceive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be "my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty:" For as it is in ver. 15, 16. "What concord hath Chriſt with Belial? "and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?" Revel. xviii. 4. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be "not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her "plagues."

There is a chaage given, that they ſhould not comply with, nor partake of the wicked's ſins, as they would not be liable to their plagues; for, people who join with enemies any manner of way, expoſe themſelves to the greateſt hazard. The Jews who were at Babylon, thought themſelves in a ſecurer condition, than theſe who were at Jeruſalem, becauſe they were invironed about with the ſtrength of enemies; yet their caſe was very hazardous, for a cloud of God's wrath was ready to break forth upon them, if they continued in that caſe that they were in, by ſtaying in the enemies camps: And

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this was uſed as an argument to bring them out, that they were to flee out of Babylon, before the Lord brought his judgments upon Babylon.

The greateſt part of this land thinks, that the remnant, who deſire to keep themſelves from joining with enemies, in leſs or in more, expoſe themſelves to the greateſt of hazard; but, believe it, a little time will make it appear, that as there is leaſt ſin in their way, ſo alſo there ſhall be leaſt hazard in it. O! whereunto ſhall I liken adverſaries, and compliers with them? Adverſaries are like a great tree, ſending forth great branches and boughs; and compliers are like a company under that tree, reſorting to it for ſafety: But what comes of it? the Lord drops down a drop of his wrath from heaven upon it, which conſumes the tree, and it falls, and the weight thereof cruſheth all under it: So, enemies never get a fall, but all that are under their ſhadow get a great cruſh; for, they are like a wall, built up with untempered mortar, and ſuch as flee in under the ſhadow of the wall, ſhall be cruſhed by the fall thereof, when the ſtormy wind from on high rents the wall, and brings it to ruin. And believe me, friends, the day is near, when wo and calamity ſhall be ſeen to abide them, that are to be found amongſt enemies camps; and the farther that people are from their ſins, the farther they ſhall be from their plagues.

Now for uſe of this doctrine, I ſhall give eight ſorts of folk warning of their ſin and danger.

I. The firſt ſort of folk, to whom I would give warning, are theſe who join with this Romiſh prelacy; when God comes to puniſh enemies, they ſhall find the weight of his hand. I may allude to that word, Hoſ. x. 14, 15. "Therefore ſhall a tumult ariſe among thy people, and all thy forteſſes ſhall be ſpoiled, as Shalman ſpoiled Betharbel in the day of battle: The mother was daſhed in pieces upon her children; ſo ſhall Bethel do unto you, becauſe of your great wickedneſs:" Your idolatrous Bethels, that now you go under for ſafety, ſhall bring down ſad judgments, woes, calamities, and vengeance upon you; Jer. ix. 15. "Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, behold, I feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them the water of gall to drink;" for the Lord hath many articles of indictment againſt you.

(1.) He hath idolatry to charge upon you; concerning this, I may allude to that word, Ezek. xxii. 3. *The city maketh idols againſt herſelf, to defile herſelf.* Believe it, ſirs, the Lord will find you chargeable in his ſight with idolatry: for it is not God that ye worſhip, but man; and it is his acts and laws that ye obey, in hearing the curates. But ye will ſay, they take

take their text out of the bible; but they may as well take it out of the acts of parliament.

(2.) He hath *covenant breaking* to charge againſt you; and ſhall ye proſper? ſhall ye eſcape? or, ſhall ye break the covenant, and be delivered? Ezek. xvii. 15. Remember what ye are engaged unto by covenant, with up-lifted hands, to the moſt high God, *viz.* to extirpate popery, prelacy, and whatever is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs, and that, to the utmoſt of your power. How contrary to this is it, to comply with prelacy, and other ſinful courſes, which are breaches of covenant, and a betraying of the cauſe of Chriſt. to the utmoſt of your power?

(3.) The third article of your indictment is, bloodſhed: He will find the blood of the ſaints in your ſkirts: Hence is that word, Ezek. xxii. 3. The city ſheddeth blood in the midſt of it; and that word, Jer. ii. 34. *Alſo in thy ſkirts is found the blood of the ſouls of the poor innocents: I have not found it by ſecret ſearch: but upon all theſe.* The blood which enemies have ſhed, will be found in your ſkirts, that comply with enemies, when God comes to make inquiſition for the ſame. Ye who juſtify enemies in ſhedding of blood, and ſay, It was but folly to ſtand out againſt ſuch courſes, and to reſiſt unto blood; remember what is ſaid, Jer. v. 29. *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, ſaith the Lord? Shall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?* O! believe it, ſirs, that his diſpleaſure is againſt ſuch courſes, which people are ſinfully following for ſafety; he will not let ſuch ways paſs without writing folly upon them: But remember that he hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that he would turn from his wicked ways and live. O! therefore, turn from your wicked ways, Why will ye die, ſaith the Lord?

2. The ſecond ſort of folk that I would warn, are theſe who join with the eraſtian indulgency; of whom it may be ſaid, as in Iſaiah xxix. 13. "And their fear towards me is "taught by the precept of men." Indeed the Lord will have the ſame articles of indictment againſt them, that he hath againſt other compliers; and therefore remember what is ſaid, in Ezekiel xxiii. 32, 33. "Thus ſaith the Lord God, Thou "ſhalt drink of thy ſiſter's cup, deep and large, thou ſhalt "be laughed to ſcorn, and had in deriſion; it containeth "much: Thou ſhalt be filled with drunkenneſs and ſor-"row, with the cup of aſtoniſhment and deſolation, with "the cup of thy ſiſter Samaria." The indulged ſhall drink of the cup of their ſiſter prelacy; the Lord will put the ſame cup in the hand of the one, that he puts in the hand of the other; for the Lord hath the ſame articles of indictment againſt both. O! remember this, and turn to the Lord; for, why will ye die?

3. The third ſort of folk, to whom I would give warning, is, peace-makers with enemies: Remember what is ſaid, Iſa. lvii. 21. *There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* Yet, though there be no peace from God to the wicked, ye will be at peace with them, and will not lift up your hands againſt them, but will go on with them in their evil courſes; therefore, as theſe who break wedlock with God, and ſhed innocent blood, are judged, ſo will the Lord judge you. He hath in the articles of your indictment, rebellion, bloodſhed, and perjury, to libel againſt you: Therefore, return, O! backſliding children, to the Lord; for he is merciful, and will not keep his anger for ever, againſt ſuch as repent and return to him.

4. The fourth ſort of folk that I would warn, are upholders of enemies; and, under theſe, I comprehend ceſs and locality payers, and all the eraſtian indulged: And by this ye have made the hearts of the righteous ſad, and ſtrengthned the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way, Ezek. xiii. 22. The Lord will have this to libel againſt you, the ſtrengthning of the wicked's hands in wicked courſes: And when their day comes, that the whirlwind of the Lord goes forth in fury, and falls upon the heads of the wicked, then ye will get a ſad cruſh, with the fall of theſe that ye have been endeavouring to uphold. Remember this, and return to the Lord, O! backſliding children.

5. The fifth ſort that I would warn, is, juſtifiers of enemies; and, under theſe, I comprehend all payers of fines: For, ſuch not only ſtrengthen the hands, but alſo juſtify enemies, and ſay, that they are wrong, and enemies are right; otherwiſe, why ſhould they puniſh themſelves, why ſhould they wrong themſelves ſo far? This alſo comprehends all theſe of all ranks, who make choice of their own impriſonments.

In the ſixth chapter of Zechariah we read of ſeveral horſes therein mentioned, and that the black and white horſes were ſent into Babylon; and the griſled horſes were ſent into Egypt. Obſerve from thence, That Babylon being the place that the Lord ſent his people to, by his ſpecial hand, for the puniſhment of their ſins and iniquities, God ſent forth there the black horſes, ſignifying thereby the deſtruction of the Babylonians: After that, he ſent forth white horſes, ſignifying proſperity to the Jews: But he ſent forth griſled horſes to the land of Egypt, ſignifying a mixed diſpenſation to the land of Egypt, whereunto many of the Jews went of their own accord, with Johanan the ſon of Kareah, after the death of Gedaliah; the Egyptians were not puniſhed in pure wrath, as the Babylonians were: but uſed with a mixed diſpenſation of judgment and mercy. For proof of this ſee Jer. xxiv. 5, 6, 7.

5, 6, 7. many promiſes of good things to the captives in Babylon. And chap. xliv. 11,—14. ſevere threatnings againſt the voluntary exiles in Egypt. They were far from the caſe of ſuch Jews as were in Babylon, in the affliction whereunto God had caſten them; for ſuch as chuſed their own affliction, were worſe than thoſe who were in the affliction that God had tryſted them with. Believe this, there ſhall be a viſible difference betwixt them who chuſe their own affliction, and theſe who take what affliction God hath caſten them into. And I comprehend under this, ſuch as come from among the enemies hands, by granting bonds of compearance; they juſtify enemies, in ſaying they are ſo deſervedly puniſhed, and enter them, not priſoners of Chriſt, but priſoners of men, with their own conſent. Now, let this be remembred, which is ſpoken by the prophet Ezekiel, *That by this ye ſtrengthen the hands of the wicked, that they ſhould not return from their wicked ways*, Ezek. xiii. 22. when they are both juſtified and ſtrengthned in their evil courſes. by ſuch compliance; *O! backſliding children, return, ſaith the Lord, for I am married to you.*

6. The ſixth ſort of folk, to whom I would give warning, are ſuch as fall from their duty, Zech. x. 6. and them that are turned back from the Lord. O! ſirs, believe this, when the Lord comes, and pours forth his judgments upon his enemies, theſe ſhall not eſcape, who have fled from their duty, for fear of hazard, and for a ſafe condition in the world; the Lord will make it appear, that that which they have taken to ſafe them from trouble, ſhall involve them and inſnare them inevitably into calamity; the Lord will make them to know his might, and his power and that his name is the Lord of hoſts. O! the greateſt part of this land is chargeable with this; they have turned back from following the Lord, and laid aſide their duty, becauſe of the hazard that attends duties. But, believe this, ſay the contrary who will, the ſhorteſt cut to die well, is only to live well. And they who know not duty, are not ſo guilty, as they who know it and forbear it. They have turned back from bearing up the Lord's ſtandard, becauſe of danger in the way. And, O! that people would follow miniſters no further than they follow the ways of the Lord. But, believe me, the Lord will give ſuch a teſtimony againſt lying by from duty, upon the account of hazard in the way, that the ſame courſes which they take to decline duty, ſhall involve them in inevitable calamity.

7. The ſeventh ſort, to whom I would give warning, are theſe who plead for the enemies intereſt, and thereby ſtrengthen enemies hands, that they turn not from their evil ways. O! that people would plead more for their mother church, which is ſo greatly wronged, and for the wrongs ſhe hath got-

ten, and les for enemies who have wronged her. I wonder what is in peoples hearts, who have their mouths opened in pleading for a milignant intereſt, more than for their mother church, which is ſo greatly wronged by theſe enemies. But, believe this, theſe that plead ſo much for it, ſhall never be honoured to do a good turn for the Lord.

8. The eighth ſort of folk, that I would give warning to, are ſuch as are ſtrangers to God: when God comes to make his juſtice known, they ſhall not be unpuniſhed; for he will make no difference between enemies and ſtrangers, Zeph. i. 6. and thoſe that have not ſought the Lord, nor inquired for him. O! remember what is ſaid, Pſal. l. 22. *Now conſider this, ye that forget God, leſt I tear you in pieces, and there is none to deliver.* O! conſider this, ye that make no conſcience of duty in ſeeking the Lord, but neglect and forget to ſeek him; for ye ſhall be made to drink of the wine of the Lord's pure diſpleaſure, when the whirlwind of his wrath falleth with pain upon the heads of the wicked. O! ye that forget God, ye ſhall not miſs his wrath in that day: O will ye believe this, and take warning, and ſeek the Lord; and remember the exhortation that the Lord giveth you, to come out from among all ſuch as are carrying on ſinful courſes, and be no longer partakers with them in their ſins, leſt ye be alſo partakers with them in their plagues, Rev. xviii. 4. O! come out, and be ſeparated, and touch not the unclean thing, 2 Cor. vi. 17. O! that ye would take warning, and flee ſpeedily from the hazard that ye are in of judgments, that are hanging over your heads, and ready to fall down upon you, when the Lord is coming to make a ſacrifice for himſelf; flee, flee unto him out of wrath's way; O! flee from among the wicked; why will ye be found among their camps when he comes to reckon with them? It is like, ye will ſet light by all this; but, believe it, time will make it evidently appear, that ſuch as are found in enemies camps, ſhall drink of enemies cups, when God pleads his controverſy with this land.

But here a queſtion ariſeth from the doctrine propoſed, which is this, Why is it neceſſary that ſo many reaſons are uſed to enforce this exhortation, to deliver themſelves from Babylon? or, why is an exhortation to this ſo neceſſary? The reaſon is, becauſe there was ſuch murmurings in them to come; they had great unwillingneſs to leave Babylon, and to join with the work of God. So, from this, I lay down this doctrine.

Doct. *That it is an uſual and very ordinary ſin in many, to neglect the glory of God, and that which is their own good.* Pſal. liii. 2, 3. *God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to ſee if there were any that did underſtand, that did ſeek God:*

Every

Every one of them is gone back, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one. Pſal. xiv. 13. *They are corrupt, there is none that doth good, no not one.*

O! it is an uſual, but an explicable heinous ſin, for men to neglect God's glory and their own good. But, what are the reaſons, that men are not bent in ſeeking God's glory, and their own good? The cauſes why men are kept from ſeeking the glory of God, and their own good, and are hindered from joining with the work of God, whereby their own good is moſt advanced, are theſe,

1. Ignorance of God is a great cauſe that hinders people from coming to him, and ſeeking his glory, and their own good in him; for, as it is ſaid, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is.* Alas! God is an unknown God to the moſt part of men; therefore they will not ſeek his glory, join to his work, nor to their own duty, nor ſeek the advancing of his kingdom, and their own good. But believe this, as they that know him will put their truſt in him, Pſal. ix. 10. ſo they that know him will ſerve him? and they that know him will believe in him, and evidence their faith by ſeeking and ſerving him.

2. The ſecond cauſe that hinders people from coming to Chriſt, and ſeeking God's glory, and their own good, is unwillingneſs. Jeſus Chriſt hath ſuch to expoſtulate with, John v. 40 *And ye will not come to me that ye might have life.* O! what hinders people from joining with the work of God! It is their unwillingneſs; they are ſo unwilling, that they will not come to Jeſus Chriſt, in that way that he hath appointed; and therefore will not cordially embrace that which is for the promoting of God's public glory, and that which is their own duty, and for their own good.

3. The third cauſe is unbelief: Many believe not that there is a God; and this hinders them from coming to him; for he that cometh to God, muſt believe that he is, Heb. xi. 6. for without the true belief of his being, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him, and a ſin-revenging God, to ſuch as deſpiſe him, none can come to him in a right way, to ſeek his glory and their own good. But, O! if theſe things were believed, his will would not be diſobeyed by men.

4. The fourth cauſe why people are ſo unconcerned with the Lord's public glory, and their own good, is negligence and ſloth; a ſin wherewith the moſt part of men are poſſeſſed; for, as Solomon ſaith, Prov. xxvi. 15. *The ſlothful hideth his hand in his boſom, it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth:* This is a great cauſe, why men will not put in their hand to the work of God, they are ſo very ſlothful; for, were there not ſo much ſloth and negligence among people, there would

would not be ſo much need of ſo many exhortations, to ſtir up people to ſeek God's glory, and their own good.

5. The fifth cauſe is love of the world; for, as it is ſaid, 1 John ii. 15. *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* O! there is ſuch gladneſs of heart in purſuing the things of the world, that the work of God gets no room in the hearts of the moſt part of men; neither is the enlargement of his kingdom ſtudied by them, becauſe their hearts are exerciſed about worldly things.

6. The ſixth cauſe that hinders many, that they will not put their hands to the work of God, is prejudice, that they take up at the work; we may ſee an example of what became of theſe that took up prejudice at Chriſt and his cauſe; for, of them it is ſaid, John vi. 66. *From that time many of his diſciples went back, and walked no more with him;* they went back at that time, becauſe they took up a prejudice at his doctrine. There are many who ſtand at a diſtance from the work of God, becauſe of the prejudice they take up at it; this prejudice that they take up at it, hinders many from putting their hand to the work, and ſeeking thereby God's glory, and their own good.

7. The ſeventh cauſe (and I ſhall but name it) is unwillingneſs to embark in difficulties: This is a great cauſe, even the unwillingneſs that is in the moſt part, to embark with theſe difficulties, that attend the owning of the cauſe, Prov. xxvi. 15. *The ſlothful man ſaith, there is a lion in the way.* If there was not an unwillingneſs in people to embark with difficulties, people would be more ready to put their hand to the work, and to ſtudy his glory and their own good; but all theſe are great hinderances in peoples way; ignorance, unwillingneſs, unbelief, love to the world, negligence, prejudice at the ways of God, and unwillingneſs to embark in difficulties.

Now, ſearch and try yourſelves, ye that are ſlack-handed, and ye that are lying by, from putting hand to the work of God, and to your duty. Search and try, which of theſe things are in your way, and come over whatever hinders you, and put to your hand to his work; ſtudy his glory, and this ſhall be for your own good; for, remember what he hath ſaid, 2 Cor. vi. 18. *And I will be a father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord almighty.* What a poor bargain do ye make, who are in enemies camps? and what poor company will ye have of enemies, when ye and they ſhall ſtand before the tribunal of God, when they ſhall cry to hills and to the mountains to cover them from the face of the Lamb, and from the preſence of a provoked God? What a ſad ſight will it be to all the wicked, when he ſits upon his throne for judgment, and ſets the goats upon his left hand,

and

and paſſeth the ſentence of condemnation upon them? And all who walk in the ſame road with them now, will land in the ſame place with them then. Therefore as the ſheep, who are the righteous, will ſtand on the right hand then, O! ſeparate yourſelves from the wicked, and join with the righteous now, as ye would deſire to ſtand among them in that day. O! let nothing hinder you from joining with the Lord's work, and your own duty. It is no ſmall privilege that he hath promiſed to you that do ſo, that he will be your Father, and ye ſhall be his ſons and daughters. O! is it a ſmall thing, to be joint heirs with Chriſt in glory, to be his bride and ſpouſe, and to ſpend eternity in beholding him, in loving him and praiſing him? O! is it a ſmall thing to have a life of love and joy for your work through eternity, and to be members of Chriſt Jeſus, united to the King of glory? O! remember what great things he hath promiſed unto you, if ye will come to him, and ſeparate yourſelves from all unclean things. Now, take him, as he offers himſelf to be your Father: And to him be praiſe, *Amen.*

PREFACE.

THE Lord, by a ſpecial providence, hath brought us together, not knowing if ever we ſhall have the like occaſion to meet together again: Therefore I would lay before you ſome general exhortations.

1. I would exhort you to make religion more your work than you have done; take up yourſelves more with the one thing needful, to get your calling and election made ſure; for, I muſt ſay it to my own grief, that there is little to be ſeen of that ſerious exerciſe; O! little of it to be found among the moſt part in this place of the country, O ſirs! be exhorted to make religion your main work; it will not be a profeſſion, neither will it be man's verdict, nor the approbation of all men and Chriſtians in the world, that will do it; and though ye ſhould be very conceited of yourſelves, that will not do it; it is not he that men approve of, that is accepted of God, but he whom God himſelf approves of. Again, I ſay, be exhorted to lay religion to heart; labour to know the work of regeneration upon your ſouls, for it is neither circumciſion nor uncircumciſion that availeth any thing, but only a new creature. Whatever ye be, if ye be

not

not new creatures, ye cannot ſtand uncondemned before the tribunal of the ſupreme Judge of heaven and earth: I ſay, then ſee to your regeneration, and lay religion to heart.

2. I would exhort you to this, to get a continued ſight of the precious neſs of the cauſe of Chriſt, as it is his cauſe; O! get a continued ſight of the goodneſs of his cauſe. Believe me, a lukewarm temper is the moſt diſpleaſing to God, of all tempers. Awaken out of your lukewarm temper, leſt he ſpue you out of his mouth when he deals mercifully with other corners of the land.

3. I would exhort you to this, to follow no man implicitely. Paul, who was an apoſtle of Jeſus Chriſt, ſays, 1 Cor. xi. 1. *Be ye followers of me, even as I alſo am of Chriſt:* It hath been the plague and ſnare of the moſt part of profeſſors in this land, that they have followed men implicitely. It was not the cauſe that they followed, but men; and we have ſeen the ſad fruits of this; for, whenever any men of note fled back from the Lord, they always get a fleece away with them. I ſay, ye muſt not have your eyes in other mens heads, nor your faith pinned to other mens ſleeves: ye muſt ſee and believe for yourſelves; they have poor guides, who have men for their guides; for man is a very changeable and unſtable guide; ye muſt look upon them, as they are but men. The Lord hath taken as much pains on this land, as upon any land to have our eyes taken off men; for he hath proclaimed this through all the corners of Scotland, That *all fleſh is graſs.*

4. I would exhort to this, to follow no men, be who they will, that ſlip out of God's way; follow no man againſt whom God hath a controverſy, for going out of his way. It is an ordinary thing, in the moſt part of profeſſors mouths, that ſuch a man is a godly man; but, believe it, to follow a godly man in his ſinful courſes, will never be approven of by God, and it is very deſtructive to his cauſe; for, the more godly men be in their profeſſion, their offence and ſcandal is the more groſs; though a man, as to his ſtate, be a godly man, yet that warranteth no man, who deſigneth heart honeſty, to follow him in his ſinful practices: Jonah was a godly man, and a great prophet, yet the Lord contended with the heathen for his ſake, when he was out of God's way, as is clear from the firſt chapter of Jonah: he fled from God's ſtandard and banner, and refuſed to preach when God bade him; and therefore God purſued him with a ſtorm, and the heathens for being in company with him. Let me tell you, many a man hath met with croſs diſpenſations for other mens ſakes: O! be intreated to follow no man, when out of God's way, Follow none whoſe ways are diſpleaſing to God, tho' otherwiſe never ſo godly, and their profeſſion never ſo eminent

nent; for, the more eminent that their profeſſion formerly was, and the more apparantly godly that they have been, the greater is their ſin, and the greater hurt the cauſe gets by their ſcandalous offences: Would to God, ye were more pleading for the wrongs done to his cauſe, than for men, whom ye call godly, in theſe corners.

5. I would exhort you to lay your accounts with what may befal you. Many know not what it is to count the coſt; and then, when any piece of coſt comes to their door, they are ſurprized with it. O! lay your account with the worſt that can befal you; and ye ſhall find the trial the more eaſy, when it is laid to your door; the man that is always laying his account with the worſt of it, is the man that ſeemingly ſhall be carried through, and ſhall be moſt free of the incident pieces of coſt, that many ſhall be put to. Believe this, if any win through the ſtorm, it ſhall be the man that always lays his account with the worſt, and is always embracing the worſt that can befal him in the way of his duty. Look for other things than ye have met with hitherto: Believe me, ye may come under ſharper things, than all that ye are come under yet; and, O! that they may not come upon you ſleeping and unprepared.

6. I would exhort you to this, ly near God, keep communion with him, and be not far from your ſtrength, in the day of God's controverſy. I tell you, there is more than the habit of grace required, for carrying you through troubles; and, I fear, the moſt part of you know not what grace is; for it is grace in exerciſe, that muſt carry you through troubles: Faith and love in exerciſe, is neceſſary for this. O! ſtudy the exerciſe of grace, and communion and nearneſs with the Lord, that ye may not be far from your ſtrength, in the day that ye are called to give proof of your faith in him, and love to him. O! keep communion with him, and draw near to him, for there is nothing but deadneſs and darkneſs to them that are far from him; and that ſoul that is far from him, is a prey to every wind of temptation; and a ſmall temptation lays them on their back, who are living at a diſtance from God; for, it will not be the thing that hath been received formerly, that will carry through, but a continual ſupply of grace muſt be ſought after. Therefore keep up communion with God and draw near to him; for they that are far from himſelf ſhall periſh: And purſue after him with heart longing deſires, that he may draw you into himſelf.

SERMON X.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

GOD is an unknown God to the moſt part, and a miſtaken God by very many: O! if he were known, this preſent condition to bear affliction for his name and cauſe, would be envied; and if he were known, the church's privileges would be admired; for he withholds no good thing from them that ſeek him uprightly. But to come to the purpoſe, I ſhall not detain you, with reſuming any thing that hath been ſaid rfom theſe words; ſuppoſing that there are few of you, but who have heard the ſame at leaſt ſomewhat of the ſame. You may remember that there are five particulars that we noticed in the words;

1. That Jeſus Chriſt is the faithful interpreter of the Father's will; for he ſaith, *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts:* and herein he declareth the Father's mind.

2. That he was ſent of the Father, and employed by him, to ſee his will executed upon the heathen nations.

3. The time thereof, *After the glory*, that is, after he had viſited his people, which are his glory, by afflicting them; or, after he had manifeſted his glory by a begun reſtoration of them.

4. The cauſe, why he is ſent unto the nations, was, becauſe they had ſpoiled the Lord's people, *He hath ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you.*

5. The reaſon and motive why he was moved to come againſt the nations, which is drawn from his own ſympathy with his people, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

The firſt two particulars were ſpoken to; and now I proceed to the third, which was, The time wherein Jeſus Chriſt was ſent unto theſe nations who were his enemies, for the help of his church, *viz. After the glory*, that is, after he had viſited his people with affliction, and begun to deliver them, by his own out ſtretched arm: And from this I lay down this doctrine.

DOCT. *That the church is Chriſt's glory.* Iſa. iv. 5. *For upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.*

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The church is Christ's glory, as it is distinguished from that universal kingdom, which he hath with God, and as he is God equal with the Father; whereby he is Lord of heaven and earth, and over all creatures: He hath the church for his peculiar and particular kingdom, where he delights to manifest his glory; for she is his declarative glory, his purchase, and the price of his precious blood, and society where he desires to dwell. O! who can set forth the love of Christ to his church? for she is beautiful through his comeliness. But, to enlarge a little on this doctrine, I will tell you in what respects the church is called Christ's glory.

1. The church is called Christ's glory, because he hath glorified himself in the great work of his church's redemption; when the angel of the Lord came, and informed the shepherds of Christ's birth, we see what followed, Luke ii. 13, 14 *And suddenly there was with the angel, multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on the earth peace, goodwill toward men:* That was the song that was sung at Christ's birth and nativity, *Glory to God in the highest*, &c. That was a work that got him great glory; for therein he manifested the glory of his free grace: O! how gloriously did the boundlesness of his free grace appear in that work! And, O! how did his wisdom shine in the freedom thereof! yea, and he manifested the glory of his justice in the work of man's redemption wonderfully, in this, that he would rather suffer death himself, and thereby satisfy justice than suffer sin to pass unpunished: And therein he manifested the glory of his power in that he was able to sustain the Father's wrath; and in his church he manifests the glory of his power, in the conversion of his elect; for there is more of the power of God to be seen, in the conversion of souls to himself, than in the creation of heaven and earth; because God could create, and did create, the heaven and the earth, without the merit or mediation of his Son Jesus Christ. Heaven and earth are God's works, not as Redeemer, but as Creator; I mean, they are the work of God the Father, as Creator. It is true indeed, that, in the work of creation, and all the works of God, all the three persons of the ever blessed godhead concurred together; but Jesus Christ as he is Redeemer, the work of creation is not attributed to him, as his personal property: Yea, and moreover, in the second creation, (*viz.* the soul's conversion to God) there is an old rubbish of corrupt nature in man, which strongly opposeth and resisteth the work of grace; and therefore it is greater glory to begin and carry on the work of grace, against this strong opposition and resistance, than it was to create the heaven and the earth, against which there was no opposition.

O! ſirs, do not think that ye can make yourſelves new; do not think that ye can change yourſelves when you pleaſe, or repent and turn to God when ye pleaſe; for there is more of God's power (if rightly conſidered) in converting the ſoul that lies in ſin, than was in creating the heaven and the earth. But what ſhall I ſay of this glory which Chriſt manifeſts in the work of converſion? for it paſſeth the rhetoric of angels to expreſs it. The glory of Chriſt's truth, and low condeſcendency, is alſo manifeſted and ſhineth forth in this work, Zech. ix. 9 *Rejoice greatly. O daughter of Zion, ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem. behold thy king cometh unto thee: He is juſt, and having ſalvation. lowly, and riding upon an aſs, and upon a colt, the ſole of an aſs.*

2. The church is Chriſt's glory, becauſe he hath dignified and beautified her with his ordinances, Pſal. cxlvii. 19, 20. *He ſheweth his word unto Jacob, his ſtatutes and judgments unto Iſrael: He hath not dealt ſo with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them: Praiſe ye the Lord.* The pſalmiſt here mentions the ordinances of God, beſtowed upon his church; and then he is preſently convinced of the glory of God thereby, and of the beauty, dignity, and privileges of the church, which is under him, and then he adds this exhortation, *Praiſe ye the Lord*: And, in ſcripture-language, his ordinances are called his name; for, when it is ſaid, that he hath put his name in his temple at Jeruſalem, by his name is to be underſtood, that whereby he maketh himſelf known. Now, his ordinances are a part of that whereby he maketh himſelf known; and ſince he beautifies and dignifies his church with his ordinances, therefore his church is called Chriſt's glory: For he hath not dealt ſo with any nation; and as for his judgments they have not known them. Barbary and Turkey want theſe ordinances and ornaments; and Rome, for all her pomp, wants theſe ordinances; and this is her glory, and ſhe is called his glory: But I may ſay, that the prelates, in a great meaſure, want theſe ordinances, and the glory of his church.

3. The church is called Chriſt's glory, becauſe he maketh known in her his glorious preſence with his ordinances, Pſal. lxviii. 15, 16. *The hill of God is as the hill of Baſhan, an high hill, as the hill of Baſhan: Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which God deſireth to dwell in, yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever.* His glorious mount Zion (which is his glory) is his church, where his preſence is with his ordinances: Thus his church is called his glory. And, O! how glorioufly, ſome times, hath he ſhined and appeared in his ordinances, even in Scotland? How he hath made his glorious voice to be heard, and his footſteps to be ſeen, to drop down fatneſs in his ſanctuary? O! how have his ſtately goings been ſeen in the

the ſanctuary? There hath been much of his glorious preſence manifeſted in his ordinances in Scotland, on hills and brae-ſides: There his voice hath been heard, and his ſtately goings have been ſeen; and his people could have ſaid, with the ſpouſe, Cant. i. 12. *While the king ſitteth at his table, my ſpiknard ſendeth forth the ſmell thereof.* O! ſirs, ſee ye any thing of this? See ye any thing of the ſtately goings of his gracious preſence in his ordinances, which is one way whereby he makes his church glorious?

4. The church is called Chriſt's glory, (O! take heed unto it) becauſe ſhe carries his image, 1 John iii. 3. *And every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.* This is the godly man's exerciſe, to be holy as he is holy. O, what glory is it to be like unto Jeſus Chriſt! This is the peculiar privilege of his children, Pſal. xlv. 13. *The king's daughter is all glorious within.* Cant. iv. 9. *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe; thou haſt raviſhed my heart, with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck.* O! how glorious was his ſpouſe, how glorious was his church, of which he ſo ſpeaketh here? *Thou haſt raviſhed my heart,* &c. And, verſe 10. *How fair is thy love, my ſiſter, my ſpouſe? How much better is thy love than wine, and the ſmell of thine ointments than all ſpices?* What was the ſavour of ointments, to the deſirable ſavour of the graces of his Spirit, which he had beſtowed upon her? O! how glorious doth Chriſt's image make his church! *He is the expreſs image of his Father's perſon, and the brightneſs of his glory,* Heb. i. 3. And he ſets his image upon the true church, who are real members of his myſtical body: And, O! how glorious are they, when they are thereupon called his glory? Ye may alſo ſee what he ſaith, concerning the beauty of his church, Cant. vi. 4, 5. *Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jeruſalem, terrible as an army with banners: Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.* Now, my friends, the church is called Chriſt's glory, becauſe ſhe bears his image: Ye muſt be ſure, then to have Chriſt's image upon you, if ye would be amongſt them that he puts his name upon. For it is not the mere profeſſion of religion, that will give you a right to that name, *His glory.* It is the real bearing of his image that will do it.

5. The church is called Chriſt's glory, becauſe he delights to manifeſt his glory, in appearing and doing for her, and making her triumph over her enemies, Exod. xv. 1. "Then "ſang Moſes and the children of Iſrael this ſong unto the "Lord, and ſpake, ſaying, I will ſing unto the Lord, for he "hath triumphed glorioufly; the horſe and his rider hath he "thrown into the ſea." Verſe 21. "And Miriam anſwered "them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed glori-

"ouſly;

" ouſly; the horſe and his rider hath he thrown into the ſea." Pharoah and all his forces were purſuing the children of Iſrael, and the Lord ſuffered them to purſue them into the midſt of the ſea: But then, he brought the ſea upon them, and ſwallowed Pharaoh and all his hoſt: And thus Moſes and the children of Iſrael were made to rejoice at God's triumphing glorioufly over their enemies. God gets glory, in his wonderful appearing for his people, and making his works appear for them. So his church is his glory, becauſe he glorifieth himſelf in appearing and doing for her; and her low caſe doth not obſtruct this; for notwithſtanding that he viſited his people with trouble and affliction, yet his church was his glory: " After the glory hath he ſent me unto the na-" tions that ſpoiled you," *&c.* And when his church and people are low, and in trouble, then, I may ſay, is the time, when he moſt manifeſts his glory, in doing for them. Iſrael in the wilderneſs, met with as many proofs of God's glory, by appearing for them there, as ever they did when they came to poſſeſs the promiſed land; for, there he fed them from heaven with manna, and gave them water out of the rock to drink; he led them by a pillar of fire by night, and a pillar of cloud by day: How glorious was he in theſe appearances for them! Pſalm lxviii. 7. " O God, when thou wenteſt " forth before thy people, when thou didſt march through " the wilderneſs Selah." There Iſrael's marching through the wilderneſs is reputed to be God's marching.

6. The church is called Chriſt's glory, becauſe ſhe ſetteth forth his glory, Pſal. l. 23 *whoſo offereth praiſe glorifieth me.* The Chriſtian is much taken up, in declaring God to be a glorious God, in adorning his profeſſion by a goſpel converſation: He is much delighted in praiſing him, and in ſtudying a life of thankfulneſs to him, as well as in praying to him: So that a Chriſtian muſt take up much of his time, in praying to, and praiſing of God, that thereby he may be glorified. Slothfulneſs is a great diſhonour to the name of God; but diligence is an exalting of the name of God, and is a glory and commendation upon his name: Hence is that word, Rev. v. 11, 12. " And I beheld, and I heard the voice of " many angels round about the throne; and the beaſts, and " the elders, and the number of them was ten thouſand " times ten thouſand, and thouſands of thouſands; ſaying, " with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to " receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and " honour, and glory, and bleſſing" This is the thing that they are crying this night, above the clouds and ſtars; and all who expect to have their life through eternity, ſhould begin their work now, in glorifying and praiſing God.

7. The

7. The church is called Chriſt's glory, becauſe it is only for his name's glory, that he doth all things for her, Ezek. xxxvi. 22. "Thus ſaith the Lord God, I do not this for your "ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael; but for mine holy name's ſake, "which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye "went." Pſal. lxxix. 9. "Help us, O God of our ſalvation, "for the glory of thy name, and deliver us, and purge away "our ſins, for thy name's ſake." This is the only moving argument that the church ſhould make uſe of, *Help us, O God, for thy name's ſake.* But, e'er I proceed to the application of this doctrine, let us pray a little.

Now, I come to the application: And the uſe is an uſe of information, which I deſire to back with a word of exhortation; Hence then, be informed concerning the glorious condition of Chriſt's church: O! how glorious is it, that his church is his glory ſo many ways? It is no low and ſmall name, to be called his glory. What think ye of that name? and would ye not wonder to ſee it written upon themſelves, *His glory!* would ye not wonder to ſee that name written upon you? and if ye would have it written upon you, come and receive Jeſus Chriſt, who is glorious, and who makes his church glorious: And he will write that name upon you, which ye have, in Rev. ii. 17. *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white ſtone; and in the ſtone a name written, which no man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it:* And, Rev. iii. 12. *Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jeruſalem.* And what is that new name, but that which Paul ſpeaketh of, Phillip. ii. 9. *Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name?* What think ye of this, to have the name of your God, and the name of the city of your God written upon you? and would you have this? then come and receive Jeſus Chriſt, in the glad tidings of the goſpel, now when he is in your offer: And, as ye would tender the glory of his name, and the good of your own ſouls, ſlight him not; for it is only theſe that embrace and receive him, that glorify him in this work; for, theſe who will not take Chriſt in his offers, deny him the glory of all that he hath done, Cant. iii. 11. *Go forth, O daughter of Zion, and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him, in the day of his eſpouſals, and in the day of the gladneſs of his heart.* Chriſt hath a crown upon his head, which believers ſet upon him; and this crown is their acknowledging of him to be their Prophet,

Prieſt,

Prieſt, and King. Now he is looking down from heaven, and ſetting his eyes upon you, to ſee if there be any lad or laſs here, that will ſet the crown upon his head this day. Now, as ye would not deny Chriſt the glory that is due to him, come and embrace Jeſus Chriſt: And, to move you to this, conſider two things:

1. Conſider your own condition without him, that ye are loſt and undone, limbs of Satan, children of wrath, hell to be your dwelling-place, and devils and damned ſouls your company eternally; where ſin ſhall be your eternal torment: This is your condition without Jeſus Chriſt. What think ye of eternal excluſion from the preſence and comfort of God? And what think ye of hell, where there is nothing but utter darkneſs, weeping, and wailing for evermore, to be your dwelling-place? And what think ye of devils to be your continual company? And what think ye of ſin to be your continual life, always blaſpheming the glorious name of God? And what think ye of your condition, to be in continual torment, always weeping and gnaſhing your teeth? And all this, I ſay, is abiding you, who will not embrace Jeſus Chriſt, whatever your profeſſion be. For, believe me, a profeſſion will not ſave you from this eternal miſery, if ye receive not Jeſus Chriſt: And whatever your ſufferings be here, yet ye ſhall ſuffer this hereafter, if ye receive not Jeſus Chriſt. My heart bleeds for many ſufferers in Scotland, who ſhall ſuffer everlaſting torment in hell, becauſe they will not embrace and receive Jeſus Chriſt, this gracious and free Saviour, who is now in your offer. O! receive and embrace Jeſus Chriſt; otherwiſe, be who ye will, and do what ye will, God's juſtice ſhall purſue you; and he ſhall have war againſt you, without ceſſation; for there ſhall be no diſcharge of that war, The great warriors of the earth are lying with their weapons broken under their heads: But here is a war that hath no end. O! ye who will not receive Jeſus Chriſt, ye will ſee that ye have made a bad choice, when ye paſs through the dark gates of hell, to the inner-chambers thereof.

2. To move you, further conſider, that if ye will take him ye ſhall have him, and all his; ye ſhall drink of the living waters of life; your feet ſhall be eſtabliſhed upon that ſea of glaſs about the throne; ye ſhall have his name, and bear his image, and wear a crown of pure gold upon your heads; and follow the Lamb with palms in your hands, ſaying, *Hallelujah, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God*, Rev. xix. 1. Ye ſhall have the fine white linen garments of Chriſt's righteouſneſs, to wear in heaven in cloathing eternally; ye ſhall have the glorious cloud of witneſſes, angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, for your continual

tinual company; and ye ſhall have a life of love and joy, ever loving him that is altogether lovely, by perfect love, and joy unſpeakable, that is full of glory, becauſe of the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of him, that is ſo glorious and ſo lovely; and heaven is the place where all this is: O! then, come and take Jeſus Chriſt: Would ye make a happy choice? then take him, embrace and receive him, old and young, man and woman, lad and laſs. Now Chriſt is in your offer; you are all invited to come to him: And now, I charge you all, as ye reſpect the glory of God, and as ye deſire this happy condition that I have ſpoken of to you, ſlight not this offer: Now the golden chain of ſalvation is letten down to you, O! grip, grip it faſt, before it be taken up again: Go not away fools, leſt ye never be at ſuch a market-day again. What ſhall I ſay to perſuade you? let the excellency and glory of his great name do it: Be intreated to do it. And here I obteſt you, by what he hath purchaſed for ſinners, and by what he hath ſuffered, come and embrace him. I obteſt you, by the blood that he hath ſhed on the croſs: I obteſt you, by the drops of blood that he ſhed in the garden; and by all the joys that are above the clouds in heaven, that ye put not this offer away: And I obteſt you, by all the torments of hell, that ye put not this offer away: And I obteſt you, by the glory of heaven, and by the crowns which believers put on his head, that ye ſlight not this offer.

Here I take every man and woman to witneſs againſt one another, that you had Chriſt in your offer: And I ſhall be a witneſs againſt all of you, that have not received Chriſt this night: Yea, though he ſhould never be glorified in ſuch a ſort by me, yet I ſhall be a witneſs againſt you. And here, before the throne of grace, I declare in his name, that I have made an offer of him unto you: And therefore your blood ſhall be upon your own heads, if ye periſh, and I ſhall be free of the ſame.

I thought to have proceeded to another doctrine; but time will not allow.

PREFACE.

THE Lord hath been bringing a great trial in Galloway's way: I would aſk one neceſſary queſtion at you, Whether or not do you find yourſelves getting any good of this as yet? Believe me, you look like a people ſold under judgments, rather than chaſed into the Lord by judgments. But, my friends, if you be getting good of this trial, I will tell you what you will find wrought in you by the Lord's bleſſing.

1. You will find this wrought in you, *viz.* a more ſerious frame, and ſincere ſtudy in religion ſeeking after God; you will find religion more ſeriouſly to be your concernment. A man or a woman that is getting good of the trial, will be getting more concernedneſs with religion; you will find that made more your work, and you will find more ſeriouſneſs about it: This is one of the Lord's ſpecial purpoſes of bringing on this trial upon you: and how great and noble an advantage do you reap, if this ſhall be gained? My friends, would you get good of this trial! then be ſtirred up to make ſure work with himſelf; be ſtirred up by it to make religion your main work, and to flee in to himſelf; be ſtirred up to prize Chriſt the more, and that which he hath purchaſed for ſinners.

2. If you be getting good of this trial, I will tell you what you will find wrought in your ſouls by his bleſſing. You will find a more deep ſenſe of the vanity and hatefulneſs of ſin. The Lord is writing over and upon all the ſinful courſes of the time, vanity. And, O! that the vanity of them were a light to let you ſee the ſinfulneſs of them. He is making many to ſee this, even that their compliance with ſinful courſes will not ſave nor help them. He lets them ſee complying courſes to be vain and hateful courſes. O! all ye that would have good of this trial, be inſtructed to look back upon your ſinful ways, and upon ſin, as it hath provoked the Lord ſo to deal with you. O! look upon ſin in its own colour, as it is vain, and a hateful thing. O! how bitter and evil a thing it is, to depart from the living God! O! how hateful a thing is it to depart from him, to ſin againſt him, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, without indignation? Believe me, I will tell you one thing, that man and woman, that looks not on ſin as God looks on it, *viz.* with hatred and deteſtation, they ſhall be looked on by God, as he looks on ſin, that is, God will look upon you with hatred and abhorrency, if ye look not upon ſin with the greateſt of abhorrency.

3. If

3. If you be getting good of this trial, then you will find it working in you an acceptance of the puniſhment of your iniquities; and you will be juſtifying God in bringing it upon you. But know, that an acceptance of the puniſhment of your iniquity, is given by the Holy Ghoſt, as an evidence of fittedneſs and preparedneſs for mercies; for, when they accept of the puniſhment of their iniquities, and are humbled for their uncircumciſedneſs of heart, then he will return and have mercy, and remember his covenant with Jacob. O! accept of the puniſhment of your ſins, and take it as out of God's hand. Do not look upon the trial, as a thing coming upon you by chance, and coming only from men; take it as coming from the Lord; take it as the puniſhment of your ſins, and as his reproof: For, indeed it is moſt juſt on your part, as coming from him; and, as to his part, it juſtifies him, who doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. O! then, accept of it, as the puniſhment of your iniquity, and beware of quarrelling at God's hand; for this trial is, to know who will accept of it, and who not. *Behold, his ſoul, that is lifted up, is not up right in him, ſaith Habakkuk: but the juſt ſhall live by faith*, Hab. ii. 4. And I will tell you one thing, if you be not helped by grace to accept of it, as the puniſhment of your iniquity, you will ſoon run into iniquity, and into ſome ſinful courſe; and ſo add iniquity to ſin, which is explained by the apoſtle, and called murmuring and quarrelling, or drawing back, Heb. x. 28. *If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* For, let me ſee a man or woman quarrelling at God's puniſhing of them for their iniquities this day, and I will let you ſee a man or woman, who will turn their back upon Chriſt the next day.

4. If you be getting any good of this trial, you will find in yourſelves a patient ſubmiſſion of ſpirit, both as to God's preſent chaſtiſement, and alſo to what he may do in time to come: Even ſo, the prophet Micah holds out the church her reaping good of her affliction, when ſhe is brought to this of it. Micah vii. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* O! be patient under the Lord's hand, and ſubmiſſive to what he ſees fit to carve out in your lot; you muſt be at ſubmiſſion of Spirit, as to what he may hereafter do, if you would get good of this trial: You muſt be ſubmiſſive to his meaſuring out of your lot as he pleaſeth: You muſt not ſet bounds to the unlimited holy one of Iſrael: So the church, when humbled under his hand, ſays, Micah vii. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him, until he plead my cauſe, and execute judgment for me:* This is, I will bear what meaſure of chaſtiſement the Lord ſhall be pleaſed to let forth; I will bear it ay till he be pleaſed to remove it; I will ſet no term-day nor bounds

unto him. You that are ſeeking, and earneſtly deſiring the Lord's appearing, for breaking the yoke of the enemies, and removing the blaſphemies of the wicked, you muſt be thus exerciſed; you muſt ſubmit to his chaſtiſements, as long as he ſees fit to lay them on you.

Now, theſe things ye ſhall find wrought in you, if ſo be you get good of this preſent ſhort trial: Many other evidences may be given, but I ſhall name but another, and leave you at preſent with it.

5. If you be getting good by God's afflicting you, you will find this wrought in you, even much humility of ſpirit; for, when the Lord chaſtens his people, he ſeeks eſpecially to have them a humble people: *Humble yourſelves therefore under the mighty hand of God, and he ſhall lift you up in due time.* I ſay, you will find humility wrought in you, if ſo be you be getting good of this trial. Proud conceited folk, under the rod, declare by their practice, that they get no good by the rod: How long ſhall the Lord chaſten you, and yet your pride remain with you! O! then, humble yourſelves under his hand; for, the want of this humility draws many ſtrokes out of his hand. Humble yourſelves under God's hand then, and lie in the duſt, if ye would get good of trials. And to him only, who can bleſs this preſent trial unto you, let us pray.

SERMON XI.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

TIME, and your patience, will not allow me to repeat what, at a former occaſion, hath been ſaid on theſe words; howbeit, becauſe ſome of you have not been preſent to hear what was delivered at the ſame, I ſhall briefly deduce, reſume, or rehearſe, what hath been ſaid from the connection and diviſion of the words. As for the connection, there is here repreſented to the prophet Zechariah, a man with a meaſuring line in his hand, going to meaſure Jeruſalem, to ſee what

what was the breadth thereof, and the length thereof; and this man here, with the measuring line in his hand, is Christ, appearing to the prophet in the similitude of his human nature: And he hath a measuring line in his hand, to signify that he was exercised, or taken up about his church; and that he only can set bounds, and prescribe limits unto his church, and that he is taken up about her building. The measuring line saith, he hath the borders of his church in his own hand, and that he is the master-builder. Now, when the prophet sees, that there is presently information given him, what Christ's purpose is in shewing him this vision, *viz.* that Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls; and his purpose was, to enlarge the borders of his church; for, by Jerusalem is signified and typified the church, and that she shall be inhabited with great multitudes of people, like people dwelling without the body of a city; and Christ here prescribeth the bounds of the church: And, believe me, whatever bounds Christ prescribeth to his church, I defy all the powers in heaven or in earth to retract it: Let kings and powers of great men set their shoulders to it, and mount all their forces, they shall not retract it: Ho, ho, says he, Jerusalem shall be inhabited, as a town without walls; and that whether they will or not. But, to make up the church's happy condition, there seems something to be wanting: Where shall our safety then be (might the church say) if Jerusalem be inhabited without walls? But to obviate this their doubt, it is told them, that he will be the glory in the midst of them, and a wall of fire round about them. The expression seems to be taken from the pillar of fire, that went before the children of Israel; or from the Lord's guarding Elijah in Dotham with chariots of fire, *&c.* Howbeit, it holds out this, that the enemies of God's church run themselves into as hazardous courses, as if a man should throw himself into a burning fire. Now, this is the vision, and the Lord applies it to three sorts of folk.

1. He applies it to the Jews, who lay by from the work of the temple, and staid still at Babylon; and he useth it as an exhortation to invite them home. And here he represents to the people this vision, that he is about his work, to build his temple, and that was to encourage the Jews, who staid at Babylon, to come and join with their brethren at Jerusalem: Here you have three reasons to inforce this encouragement in the words: The first two are in the fifth and seventh verses, and the other is in the words read.

The *first* reason, because they had been scattered abroad in God's anger; and their being in that condition was an evidence of his displeasure; therefore they should not have staid

in that condition, wherein God's wrath is declared againſt them.

The *ſecond* reaſon is couched up in the ſeventh verſe, that ſince they had the name of Zion, and were profeſſors, it was very unſeemly for them to remain dwelling at Babylon, *Deliver thyſelf, O Zion*, &c. It was a ſhame to Zion to dwell at Babylon, when they might be at Jeruſalem; as if he had ſaid, It is a ſhame for profeſſors to dwell at Babylon; the very name of Zion, or of profeſſors, ſhould ſhame you out of Babylon.

The *third* reaſon is in the words of the text, *After the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you*, &c. He was about to bring judgments on the nations that ſpoiled them even upon Babylon; and therefore it was not ſafe for them to be at Babylon; for, they that are in enemies camps, when he puniſhes enemies, ſhall drink of the enemies cup. *After the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you*: And therefore flee, O daughter of Zion, out of Babylon, if thou wouldeſt not taſte of Babylon's cup.

Now, for the better underſtanding of theſe words, they were divided into theſe five particulars:

1. That Chriſt is the fit interpreter of the Father's will, for he it is who ſaith, *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts*.

2. That Chriſt is ſent to ſee the Father's will executed, or done, *I am ſent to them that ſpoiled you*.

3. The time when he was ſent, *viz. After the glory*: which is to be underſtood thus, after that God had viſited his people with afflictions, Chriſt is ſent to pour down afflictions on the nations that had been the inſtruments of their afflictions and calamities: Or, it is on this way underſtood, that, after the Lord had begun to manifeſt his glory, in their begun reſtoration, he ſent me to the nations, that they may not impede or hinder the work.

4. The cauſe, which is, becauſe they had *ſpoiled* his people.

5. The reaſon and motive, which is drawn from his own ſympathy with them, *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*: That is, they that hurt the members of Chriſt's myſtical body, touch his eye, which is the moſt tender part of the body.

Now, as to the firſt two particulars, they were a little ſpoken unto; and ſo we proceed to the third, which is the time, *After the glory*, &c. From whence this doctrine was laid down.

Doct. I. *That the church is called Chriſt's glory*: And that was ſhewn in ſix or ſeven reſpects; and it was applied by a word of uſe: And now, I proceed to a ſecond doctrine from the ſame head.

Doct.

DOCT. II. *As the Lord in his procedure doth afflict and puniſh his church, before he puniſh his adverſaries, ſo the afflictions of his people are fore runners and pledges of his enemies ruin. After the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you*: that is, after he hath viſited his people (which is his glory) with afflictions: Now, ſays he, I am ſent to the nations that ſpoiled his people

This ſecond doctrine hath two members; the firſt whereof is this,

That the Lord in the way of his procedure, puniſheth his people, before he puniſh his enemies: And you may ſee for confirmation of this, what the apoſtle ſaith, 1 Pet. iv. 17. *For the time is come, that judgment muſt begin at the houſe of God*, &c. So you ſee, The Lord in his ordinary procedure, firſt gives the cup into the hands of his people, before he yoke with enemies; and ſo he hath begun to puniſh his people in this land, before he puniſh malignants.

My friends, would ye have ſome reaſons, why the Lord doth this way proceed to puniſh his people, before he puniſh their enemies? For anſwer take theſe:

1. Reaſon. Is, that the people of God may win the more eaſily through; for the cup of God's diſpleaſure hath always the dregs at the bottom of it; which is put into enemies hands, Pſal. lxxv. 8. For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the ſame; but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them: Becauſe I ſay, he will have his people to paſs eaſily through; therefore he giveth them the brim or beginning of the cup: He giveth them the firſt of the cup; but to the enemies he giveth the dregs and bottom of it. His people get an eaſy pull of it, in reſpect of what they have, who get the dregs thereof put into their hands. O! his enemies cup is a cup of pure wrath; but his peoples cup is a cup of no wrath, but of comfort and conſolation; but the wicked's cup is a cup of pure wrath; for the dregs of the wrath of God is a very ſad cup.

2. Reaſon, why he puniſheth his people, before he puniſh his enemies, is, becauſe he will have enemies the more inexcuſable, becauſe they took not warning at his peoples rods and afflictions, Obad. ver 16. *For, as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, ſo ſhall all the heathen drink continually; yea, they ſhall drink and they ſhall ſwallow down, and they ſhall be as though they had not been.* Jer. xxv. 29. *For lo, I begin to bring evil on the city, which is called by my name; and ſhall ye be utterly unpuniſhed? Ye ſhall not be unpuniſhed; for I will call for a ſword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, ſaith the Lord of hoſts.* So, when the Lord bringeth evil upon the city, which is called by his name, and when he puniſheth his people,

ple, he thereby declares his hatred againſt ſin; and thereby warns the enemies of their danger; for, ſince he puniſheth the city and people that are called by his name, much more will he puniſh them; they ſhall not be unpuniſhed; he will call for a ſword againſt them; ſo, he puniſheth his own people firſt, that he may get his enemies rendered inexcuſable, by their not taking warning to leave their ungodly ways, when they ſee the afflictions of the Lord's people for their ſin coming from him.

3. Reaſon, why he puniſheth his people firſt, before he puniſh his enemies, is, becauſe enemies are made uſe of as the inſtruments of his peoples affliction, Iſa. x. 5, 6. *O Aſſyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the ſtaff in their hand, is mine indignation. I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical nation, and againſt the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the ſpoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the ſtreets.* So, you ſee, the Lord makes his enemies a rod in his hand, againſt his own people; therefore he muſt firſt make uſe of it on them, before he break and burn it.

As to the ſecond member of the doctrine, viz *That the afflictions of the Lord's people are fore runners of judgment on his enemies, and the reſt of the world.* Remember theſe fore-cited places, 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Obad. ver. 16. Jer xxv. 29. Ay, all your afflictions and judgments, I ſay are pledges of his pouring down his wrath upon his enemies: For, ſo long as ye have the rod on your backs, ye want not pledges and confirmation of this truth, that God will be about with his enemies. But I ſhall give you ſome reaſons to prove this point. That the Lord's puniſhing of his people is a pledge and forerunner of ſad judgments coming upon his enemies, and the reſt of the world.

1. Reaſon, becauſe thereby he declares his hatred againſt ſin: And, ſince he declares his hatred againſt ſin, in puniſhing it in his own people, how much more hatred and abhorrence hath he at it in his enemies? The ſins of adverſaries, are ſins of a groſs dye; they are groſs wickedneſs, Hab. i. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil and canſt not look on iniquity: Wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?* Hereby the prophet is holding out, that the Lord is of purer eyes, than that he can behold ſin (becauſe of his holineſs) but with hatred and deteſtation, though in his own people; and therefore how much more hatred bears he againſt the ſins of his enemies? So then, what he doth to his people, is a fore-runner, or declaration, of what is coming on his enemies: For, ſince God thereby declares that he hates your ſin, it is a pledge that he will puniſh enemies becauſe of their groſs abominations.

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2. Reaſon is this, becauſe by theſe chaſtiſements of his people for their ſins, he declares his anger againſt ſin: There is anger imported in theſe reiterated expreſſions, Obad. ver 16. *They ſhall drink, and they ſhall ſwallow down, and they ſhall be as though they had not been.* Theſe hold forth how angry the Lord is at them becauſe of ſin; and hereby he declares his anger againſt his people's ſin, by making them drink the cup of affliction at his hand; yea, how doth that, I ſay, proclaim the greatneſs of his wrath and anger againſt the ſins of heathens? His people did drink the brim, but it is ſaid of them, *They ſhall ſwallow down, and be as though they had not been;* they ſhall drink till they be conſumed. I ſay, ye may read by your afflictions, God's anger againſt your ſins; and this ye may read, as a proclamation of his anger againſt the wicked courſes of the heathen; ſo this anger is manifeſted by the chaſtiſements that befal you, and is a fore-runner of his cruel wrath, that will break forth by ſad judgments on his enemies, and the reſt of the world.

3. Reaſon is, becauſe that ſince he afflicts his own people for their ſins, notwithſtanding of their intereſt that they have in him, and his love toward them, how much more then will he puniſh the wicked of the world, who have no intereſt in him, and who have no ſpecial part of love in him? This is clear from Jer. xxv. 29. There the Lord reaſons thus, ſince he had puniſhed the people called by his own name, and the city that had intereſt in him, and to whom he had borne a kindneſs beyond others; therefore he aſſures his enemies, that they ſhould not go unpuniſhed: So, I ſay, when he puniſheth his people who have part in his ſpecial love; that is a pledge that he will grievouſly plague adverſaries, that have no ſuch intereſt in him. So then, ſince he puniſheth you, who are his people, take that as a declaration of his anger and judgments which he will bring upon his adverſaries, and them that are not his people.

4. Reaſon is, becauſe his perfect holy eye of providence is over his people, to take notice of their ways, that he may take notice of them. So, his perfect holy eye of providence is over his enemies, that he may take notice of ſin in them, and puniſh them accordingly; and ſo, as he puniſheth his people, undoubtedly he will not paſs his enemies unpuniſhed; this is clear from Zech. ix. 1. *The burden of the word of the Lord, in the land of Hadrach, and Damaſcus ſhall be the reſt thereof, when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Iſrael, ſhall be towards the Lord: And Hamath alſo ſhall border thereby; Tyrus and Sidon, though it be very wiſe.* This is meant of enemies; the Lord had a burden, *viz.* ſad judgments to bring on the land of Aſſyria, called Hadrach, from one of its idols; and Damaſcus, the chief city thereof, ſhould drink deepeſt

in the cup, the burden ſhould ly chiefly there: And remember this, by the way that the chief cities of the land, ſhall be the chief ſeats of God's judgments. Why was it that God brought this burden upon Aſſyria, but becauſe the Lord ſeeth all men (as ſome read it) to puniſh them according to their ways? The words may alſo be underſtood thus, when the Lord's people have their eyes towards him for their help, then he will bring judgments upon his enemies; yet ſome read the words thus, without thortering one another, That when the Lord is the eyes of man, in all the tribes of Iſrael, then the eyes of all Iſrael ſhall be toward the Lord; ſhewing this, that the Lord, by his eye of providence, obſerveth all nations, as well as his own people, and will alſo puniſh them; which he is declaring, by his puniſhing his own people for their ſins: And therefore, ſince he obſerves enemies ſins, as well as his own peoples ſins, he will not leave enemies ſins unpuniſhed. The Lord hath been obſerving your ways and backſlidings, or backdrawings, and is puniſhing you for them. He is alſo obſerving enemies blaſphamies and wickedneſs; and as he puniſheth you for your ſins, ſo he will puniſh them for their ſins and iniquities; and the dregs of the cup of the wrath of God is to be put into their hands; for the afflictions of the people of God are not only fore-runners of ſad judgments on adverſaries; but alſo of inſupportable judgments coming upon them: It is eaſier to bear what God lays on you, than to bear what he lays upon enemies backs.

5. Reaſon, becauſe enemies help forward the affliction of his people; and therefore he declares that their afflictions are fore-runners of enemies judgments, Zech. i. 15. *And I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen that are at eaſe: For I was but a little diſpleaſed, and they helped forward the affliction:* Therefore he is very ſore diſpleaſed with them. So, the afflictions which enemies carry on, declare that there are ſad judgments abiding them, becauſe he is very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen, for helping foreward the affliction of his people; for, when God intends by them to puniſh his people, then they purpoſe a far other thing than God intends, even his people's ruin, Iſa. x. 6, 7. *I will ſend him againſt an hypocritical nation—to take the ſpoil,—howbeit he meaneth not ſo; —but it is in his heart to deſtroy, and cut of nations not a few.* I ſay, when the Lord doth correct, afflict, and chaſten you by enemies, they are helping on their own calamity, by going beyond all bounds, propoſing your overthrow and deſtruction; I ſay, hereby they declare themſelves to be in ſuch a caſe, that your afflictions are pledges and fore-runners of their own ſad judgments; for it is in this caſe, as if a father would be angry with a ſon, and for his fault ſhould correct him; and a ſlave in the houſe, ſeeing that, ſhould begin to

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run upon him, and kill him: What think ye, would he not ſoon forget his ſon's fault, and turn his hand upon the ſlave? Even ſo it is with enemies, when God puniſheth his people; enemies, as ſo many ſlaves, run upon them, to ſlay them, therefore he will turn his hand upon theſe ſlaves, and cut them off. Theſe things may confirm us in this, that God's dealing with his people, by way of afflicting them, is a certain pledge of the deſtruction of adverſaries; for, as God is faithful in puniſhing your ſins, ſo he will declare himſelf to be juſt, in bringing heavy wrath upon them. Let me lay this home upon you by ſundry uſes.

Uſe 1. From the firſt member of the doctrine, learn to accept of, and be exhorted to receive, your puniſhment and affliction at God's hand, with great cheerfulneſs; and take it as a token of his kindneſs towards you, he hath given you the brim of the cup. My friends the greateſt ſtorm that you have, you have moderation with it, in reſpect of what comes on enemies; and ye have your ſtorm firſt; for the firſt blaſt is eaſieſt, your affliction hath moderation; but, that which comes upon his enemies, hath none. When he comes to ſeek and find his enemies out, though they ſhould climb to the top of Carmel, or hide themſelves in the bottom of the ſea, yet there his hand will find them out. His people get a hole to hide themſelves from enemies; but when God comes againſt enemies, they ſhall get no place to hide them in; yea if God were come to the fields to contend againſt enemies, I do not think that moſſes, woods, muirs, or craigs, ſhall be hiding-places for them, I mean malignants: Therefore receive your chaſtiſements with cheerfulneſs off his hands; I ſay, take it with cheerfulneſs, that he hath begun at you firſt.

Uſe 2. From this member of the doctrine, viz. *That God puniſheth his people before his enemies*, let me reprove you who refuſe to ſuffer affliction with his people: Ye who refuſe and reject his *cauſe*, ye ſhall drink deep in the *cup* of his enemies; for, believe me, they who will not ſuffer with his people, ſhall ſuffer with enemies, when he comes to plead his *cauſe* againſt them. O! but *compliers* be great fools; they think by compliance to free themſelves of ſuffering; but they ſhall involve themſelves into inevitable ſufferings; thoſe who go about and refuſe to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, ſhall ſuffer with his enemies, Pſal. ix. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth*, &c. The complying of *compliers* ſhall inſnare them into inevitable ſnares; the day is coming, when neither kirk nor court, *teſt* nor *gear*, ſhall ſave them; he will make uſe of enemies, to puniſh *compliers*: Then folly and vanity may be written upon them, and their compliance; yea, when enemies fall ye ſhall fall who comply with them: When God throws down enemies, then compliers

with enemies, who have upholden them, ſhall alſo fall down with them, when God levels his ſhots at the wicked throne of Britain, then ſhall all who are covered with the ſhadow of it, be cruſhed with the ruins of it. And ſo, I ſay, this trial of the godly is a token of his love; and thereby he is ſeeking to chaſe ſome of you out of enemies camps, who have had very little will to part with them and their camps. There is ſome, who, if they could have eſcaped ſo, they would not have parted with them; they would have been content to have payed the ceſs and locality, that they might have bidden in their houſes; yet it ſhall not be ſo; for, if God have a love unto you, he will not leave you ſo: That family that he hath not a mind to deſtroy with adverſaries, he will bring them forth: I ſay, theſe that he minds not to deſtroy with the enemies, he will bring ſuffering to their doors; therefore, refuſe not ſuffering affliction with the people of God; for, believe me, if ye have run from them, and continue ſo to do, the judgments of God, that he ſends upon his enemies, will overtake you. O! then, ſee what ye will chuſe: whether will ye take part with his people, to drink the cup of his Fatherly diſpleaſure, and chaſtiſements; or, will ye take part with enemies, and drink in the cup of his unmixed wrath and judgments? Moſes rather chuſed to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.

Uſe 3. From the ſecond member of the doctrine, *viz. That the puniſhments of the people of God, are fore-runners of ſad judgments upon enemies, and the reſt of the words;* learn this uſe of inſtruction; be aſſured, enemies ſhall not be unpuniſhed; for your puniſhments are proofs and prognoſtics of ſad judgments coming upon them. Jer. xxv. 29. It was a ſad token for malignants, when God began to chaſten his people for their ſin; they may therefore be aſſured, that he will puniſh them: Ye have his promiſe for it, even for the confirmation of this; yea, their ſtrength, wiſdom, nor riches, ſhall not ſave them; for the Lord is he that is moſt powerful, and faithful; and therefore he will be about with them: He is a faithful God, in executing what he had threatned upon his people for their ſins; and therefore he will be faithful in executing judgments upon his enemies for their ſins.

I proceed to the third doctrine from this particular, *After the glory hath he ſent me to the nations that ſpoiled you.* I told you, it might be underſtood two ways, thus:

1. That in the Lord's viſiting his people with affliction, then he would turn his hand againſt his enemies; and from this I have drawn two doctrines:

DOCT. I. *That the people of God are his glory.*

DOCT.

DOCT. II. *As he puniſheth his people before his enemies, ſo their chaſtiſements and afflictions are fore runners of ſad judgments upon the enemies.*

So, from the other ſenſe of the words, *viz.* After that he had begun to manifeſt his glory, in their begun reſtoration, he will puniſh his enemies, that they may not mar the carrying on of his glory: And, from this ſenſe, I lay down this doctrine:

DOCT. III. *That when the Lord begins to manifeſt his glory to his people, either in the time of ſtorms, or after ſtorms, in their low caſe, it is a pledge or token, that he will carry on his glory, and that he will not ſuffer the carrying on of it to be hindred.*

For proof of this, ſee Deut. xxxii. 4. *He is the rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth, and without iniquity, juſt and right is he.* Pſalm cxi. 6. *He hath ſhewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen.* So, *after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you:* Yea, notwithſtanding that they were ſpoiled, they were his glory: For, all that their afflictions did, to obſtruct their being that in his ſight; yet they were his glory, and precious in his ſight; notwithſtanding of all their afflictions, yet they were his declarative glory; for, their intereſt ſtands in him, and his love is towards them, and his care of them continues, as no chaſtiſement can break off this intereſt between God and his people; ſo, God's love to, and care of, his people, ſtands; they continue to be his glory, notwithſtanding of affliction. But, for application of this point, to our own caſe, I would tell you ſome ways of God's manifeſting his glory amongſt us, in our low caſe; whereby we may be confirmed in this, that he will carry on his work, notwithſtanding of all oppoſition.

(1.) He is manifeſting his glory, by truth's getting many deliverances; yea, even in theſe times, when we fell, truth met with theſe deliverances: As the Lord, by our fall at Bothwell, brought more clearneſs and vindication to the truth, than our ſtanding would have done; yea, I will tell you, truth is meeting with a deliverance amongſt you, by this preſent trial; many a man lippened to the paying of the ceſs, as a ground to keep them in their houſes; who, yet, notwithſtanding of that, they ſhall be caſten out of their houſes, that God may write over that courſe, folly and vanity: And now, that truth is meeting with a deliverance, take it as a manifeſtation of his glory, as a token that he will carry on his glory, hinder who will; and that he will remove impediments out of the way.

(2.) He manifeſts his glory, by continuing a witneſſing remnant in the land: notwithſtanding of all the backſlidings therein,

therein, yet he hath had a witneſſing remnant in this land; yea, there is not a ſtep of our defections, but our Lord hath had a ſmall remnant to witneſs for him againſt the ſame; and he hath a remnant this day, to witneſs againſt all defections and compliances: So, by this we may ſee him manifeſting his glory; and it is a token, that he will carry on his work, and will remove away whatever obſtructs the ſame.

(3.) He manifeſts his glory, by accepting of ſacrifices at the hands of that remnant; yea, he hath accepted of proteſtations at their hands, when they could not get ſin hindred; yea, he hath accepted of declarations and teſtimonies, on fields, in cities, and ſeas, for his cauſe and truth; ſo that, we may ſay, on the matter, as Manoah's wife ſaid unto him, (being afraid of the angel) *If the Lord had a mind to deſtroy us, he would not have accepted a meat offering and a drink offering at our hands*: So, I ſay, if the Lord minded to deſtroy us, he would not have accepted ſuch ſacrifices at our hands: So then, the Lord has not a mind to deſtroy, but will carry on his work and glory, and will remove all obſtructions out of the way. Had he not accepted ſuch teſtimonies, declarations, and proteſtations, at your hands, where had we been long e'er now? And thus he, in our low caſe, manifeſtshis glory. Take it then, as a pledge of his carrying on his work and glory, and that he will remove all obſtructions out of the way, and that he will not give over carrying on his work and glory, till he perfect it; he is buſy building his church, and though his building be, as it were, under the ground; yet, becauſe he is building, he thereby declares, that he will not give it over, till he get it unto the end, with ſhouting and acclamations of joy, and crying, Grace, grace, unto it.

(4.) He manifeſts his glory, by his owning and countenancing his remnant in their ſufferings; he hath made them to declare, at the day of their extreme or greateſt ſufferings, that that day was the moſt joyful day that ever they had, even when going to the ſcaffolds, to lay down their lives for him; they have been made to go ſinging and rejoicing, declaring that they would not then change their lots for many kingdoms; yea, how many of them have been made to appear like the children of kings? and, how he hath filled their mouths with ſongs of praiſe, and making them ſay, That the lines were fallen to them in pleaſant places, when that he was with them in the fire, and the water? So he manifeſts his glory, by giving his remnant cheerfulneſs of mind, to endure ſufferings for him; ſo he lets out his kindneſs in this day of trial unto you, when he lifts up the light of his countenance upon you; and ſo ye may take this as a pledge of his carrying on his work and glory.

(5.) He

(5) He manifeſts his glory among us, by his leading, and feeding the remnant in their low caſe; ſo that in ſome caſe it may be ſaid, that there was not more of God ſeen, in leading the Iſraelites through the wilderneſs, by the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, than there is in his leading of his poor remnant this day, by his careful eye of providence, upon us, and about us; for, we have rocks on the right hand, and rocks on the left hand, parties on the right hand, and parties on the left hand; and yet he hath led a remnant through all theſe, in the good old way. And, hath he not manifeſted more of his attributes, in feeding and leading his people now, than to Iſrael of old, as ſpiritual onlookers do behold?

(6.) He manifeſts his glory, in plucking his people as preys out of the enemies teeth ſometimes, and relieves and delivers out of priſon houſes ſometimes; and ſometimes he pulls them out of the hands of ſoldiers, and ſometimes delivers them, when they are purſuing them, and hides them under his wings: Think ye, that if the Lord's ſpecial providence were not in all this, but ſo many hunters would ſoon hunt us all out?

(7.) He manifeſts his glory amongſt us, in our low caſe, by increaſing the number of the remnant, in many corners of the land, notwithſtanding of all the cruelties and oppoſitions by enemies: So, is it not to be ſaid of ſome places of the land (to the praiſe of his name be it ſpoken) the more they were oppreſſed, the more they grew; ſo that it is our wonder, conſidering how many have been taken away by death, baniſhment, and otherwiſe, that yet they are not miſſed; the Lord hath not been wanting to keep up the number, yea, to increaſe the number; ſo that, if you ſhall paſs through ſome corners of the land, this ſhall be ſounded in your ears, *Seeing I have loſt my children, who hath begotten me all theſe?* O! that it might be ſo with poor Galloway! that this great oppreſſion might make them grow! I hope it ſhall bring ſome of you more from the enemies camps! O! let it make none of you fall more into enemies camps. I ſay, take all theſe as manifeſtations of his glory, and pledges that he will carry on his work, and perfect it, notwithſtanding of what may obſtruct it.

Let me lay this home upon you, by a word of uſe, for conſolation. Be comforted then, that, ſince God is ſo many ways carrying on his glory, therefore be comforted in this, that God will carry it on to the end: Enemies ſhall not be able to hinder it; therefore, encourage yourſelves in this; and in his name and ſtrength proclaim a defiance to all that enemies can do, or what created powers can do, and tell them, that ye have pledges that he will carry on his work amongſt you,

you; proclaim this to the bloody tyrant, and to the bloody council, and to the bloody ſoldiers, and let us ſay. we defy you; for we have the Lord amongſt us. O! all ye his ſaints, praiſe ye him. *Amen.*

PREFACE.

BELOVED, the plague of this generation ſeems to be hardneſs of heart. O! hard-hearted people, and unconcerned, will not all that is come upon you, afflict and affect your hearts? What unperceivingneſs of temper is this, that doth thus bewray itſelf to be in you, to behold theſe things in our day, which our eyes do ſee, and yet be without affectedneſs of heart at the ſight thereof? The Lord's holy name is blaſphemed, his work and worſhip overturned, his holy mountain laid waſte, and all our pleaſant things taken from us; Chriſt is daily crucified in his members, and will not all this affect your hearts? Believe me, the hard-heartedneſs of this generation doth argue, that ye want ſomething that you ſhould have; or it ſays, that there is ſomething wanting, of great concernment, that you ſhould be at, and that you have not yet attained unto. And,

1. I would tell you, that your hardneſs of heart declares, that there is much ignorance of God in the land, or much blindneſs, as to the taking up the being of God. O! ye do not ſee the excellency of Chriſt Jeſus, who is rejected, vilipended, and deſpiſed, and ſet at nought by this generation? againſt whom this generation hath thrown out a flag of defiance. O! if ye ſaw theſe things, theſe wrongs that are done to him, there would be more affectedneſs of heart, with, and at the diſpenſations of the day.

2. Your hardneſs of heart declares, that ye are little concerned with religion: Ah! it appears, that it is little of your exerciſe, and that it is little your work; for, they that are rightly taken up and exerciſed with religion, are taken up with the indignities done to a holy one; whom they are ſeeking to be theirs, and whom they are ſeeking to make choice of: Ay, they who are rightly concerned with religion, are even concerned with all the affronts and indignities done unto him.

3. Your

3. Your hardneſs of heart, declares much blindneſs: it ſays, ye do not ſee the precioufneſs of the cauſe of Chriſt: I fear the moſt part of you look on it as mens matters; or, as a thing of leſs value; and therefore ye come and go in it as ye pleaſe: Ay. ye would not come and go ſo in your own matters, many of you, as ye do in Chriſt s matters: The great cauſe of the unſtedfaſtneſs of many of this generation, is, their blindneſs; becauſe they ſee not the precioufneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, nor the precioufneſs of his declarative glory, whereby he maketh himſelf known: For, if this were ſeen, there would not be ſo much prigging with him, nor ſo much ſtanding with him upon theſe points; nay, difficulties would not be ſo much, or ſo big in your eyes. If ye had a right ſight of that precious one, of that lovely one, and what he hath done for ſinners, and purchaſed for them; ay, that would carry your eyes over all oppoſition that is in the way of following him. O! carnal hard-hearted generation, what ſhall I ſay unto you? O! ſtudy, and ſeek to get a ſight of the precioufneſs of Chriſt; ſtudy to make conſcience of religion: ſtudy to win to a ſight of the precioufneſs of his cauſe; and then there will be leſs need of ſo many arguments, to perſuade you to ſtedfaſtneſs. O! beware of reſervations, in following of Chriſt Jeſus, in this day of trouble and affliction. Now, that you may be more ſtedfaſt and reſolute in following of him; and, for your better help to affectedneſs of heart, I will bring three things to your remembrance.

(1.) I will bring this to your remembrance, that God is a great and terrible God, and a ſin-revenging God; and think on this, that there is a day coming, wherein ye ſhall all be arraigned before his judgment-ſeat; where the queſtion will be aſked at each one of you, O man! and O woman! how came ye to do theſe things againſt me? O how think ye ſinners will ſtand before him? How will poor bits of clay ſtand before him, when the Almighty comes as an armed man againſt them? O! fix yourſelves in the faith of this, of his being a great and terrible ſin-revenging God. O! If you ſaw and believed this, there would not be ſo much venturing upon the boſſes of the Almighty's buckler. But believe me, be who ye will, that dare adventure upon a courſe of oppoſition to him, whatever ye may boaſt of, at the putting on of your armour, ye ſhall not boaſt at the off putting thereof.

(2.) I would bring this to your remembrance, that, as he is a terrible God, and a ſin-revenging God, ſo there is a day coming, wherein you ſhall be arraigned before his tribunal ſeat, where the queſtion will be aſked, O man! O woman! how came ye to do theſe things againſt me! O! then think on it; the plea and pretences of this generation, which they give for their corrupt courſes, will then have no weight be-

fore his judgment-ſeat; it will be no excuſe, to tell them in that day, I could do no otherwiſe; for then I would have expoſed myſelf unto hazards in the world, and to the wrath of man; But, ah! ſirs, is there not a great difference betwixt the wrath of man, and the wrath of a ſin revenging God? So, I would have you ſtating the queſtion thus with yourſelves, Whether of theſe will ye undergo? for, believe me, one of them ye ſhall undergo. What think ye of the wrath of man, of the wrath of clay, in reſpect of the wrath of a ſin revenging God, of an offended majeſty? O! what think ye of a momentary diſpleaſure of inſtruments, that are in his hand, beſides the diſpleaſure of an offended majeſty, of an offended juſtice? O! ſee that ye make a good choice here: God will aſk at you one day, How came ye to own ſuch courſes againſt me! And he will admit of no excuſe at your hands. O! think on this in time.

(3.) I would bring this to your remembrance, what he hath ſaid; and, what he hath commanded to be told you, muſt be told you: *Say ye to the righteous, it ſhall be well with them, the reward of their hands ſhall be given them; But ſay to the wicked, it ſhall be ill with them, for they ſhall eat the fruit of their doings.* There are rich promiſes abiding the righteous, the Lord will have this told unto you; and there is a recompence of vengeance abiding the wicked; they ſhall be paid home, according to their deeds; ſo, he commands his word to be faithfully divided; he will have promiſes to be applied, to whom they ought to be applied, and the threatnings to be applied to whom they ought to be applied: O! if the word, of God had been rightly and faithfully applied, as the contrary is this day in Scotland; I ſay, if the promiſes had been rightly applied, and the ſcriptures rightly divided, there had not been ſo many diviſions this day in Scotland as there are: Then remember this, it ſhall go well with the righteous, and ill with the wicked.

Now, Sirs, ſee whoſe ſide ye will go to, when the cry is going through the land from the Lord, Who is on the Lord's ſide? O! my beloved friends, ſee that ye ſide yourſelves rightly now, for, there is one of two you muſt go to; ye muſt either go to his camps, or to his enemies camps; he will not have a halter amongſt you; he will have you declaring what ye are for; ye muſt be for him, or on the other ſide; therefore ſee what ye will do. O! come into his camps, and under his banner, and let us pray unto him, for grace to make a right choice.

SERMON

SERMON XII.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

THOSE that chooſe Chriſt, make a good choice, they make a right choice, yea, a right and a noble choice; for, Chriſt being theirs, all things are theirs; his grace is theirs, his glory is theirs, and he will be a hiding place to them in the day of trouble. Iſa. xxxii. 2. *And a man ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt.* Iſa. xxv. 5. *For thou haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible one is a ſtorm againſt the wall.* Pſal. xci. 14, 15. *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will ſet him on high, becauſe he hath known my name. He ſhall call upon me, and I will anſwer him: I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him, and honour him* This is the caſe of the godly man, that hath made choice of Jeſus Chriſt.

Moreover, he will appear alſo againſt all who will appear againſt his people; he will avenge the wrongs done to them. Iſa. i. 24. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, the Lord of hoſts, the mighty One of Iſrael, Ah! I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies* I ſay, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt will pay home all the injuries done unto his people; for, *Thus ſaith the Lord, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations*, &c.

Some of you may remember, how I ſhewed you the connection, with the diviſion of the words, which in ſum was this: The prophet is here ſhewed a viſion, of a man with a meaſuring line in his hand; by which Chriſt is repreſented to him, having his hand about his work, as maſter-builder of his houſe or church; ſeeing that it is he only, that ſets the bounds and limits to it. Then the prophet ſeeing this, is told the meaning of it, *viz.* That Chriſt purpoſed to build and enlarge his church: Run, tell this young man, that Jeruſalem ſhall be inhabited, as a city without walls; whereby the increaſe of the church is implied, and her proſperity is promiſed: But, to make her caſe more completely happy, there is promiſed her (ſeeing ſhe might doubt of her ſafety, in that

ſhe ſhould be without walls) great ſafety, in this promiſe of protection, *I will be a wall of fire round about them.* So learn, that all the wrongs done unto his people by adverſaries, they run as hazardous a race as if they ran through the burning fire: And this comfortable viſion is applied to three ſorts of folk.

1. To theſe who ſtayed at Babylon, and would not come to Jeruſalem, to help their brethren; and there were ſeveral reaſons given for enforcing this.

(1.) Reaſon, becauſe they were ſcattered abroad in theſe foreign places, by the Lord's diſpleaſure; therefore they ſhould not be content to ſit ſtill in ſuch a condition, whereinto they were caſt, by his indignation. And, are not people come to a great length in ſtupidity, when they are willing to ſit ſtill contentedly, even under that, which, by the bearing thereof, they bear the mark of God's diſpleaſure or anger? And I fear that the moſt part of you, if ye could get external peace and eaſe, ye would be content to bear all the blae marks of his diſpleaſure, and would be content to dwell at Babylon, to enjoy external pleaſure and eaſe, before ye come to Jeruſalem, to enjoy the privileges of the temple.

(2.) Reaſon was, becauſe they are called by the name of Zion, or, were profeſſors; and therefore it was unſeemly for them to dwell at Babylon. O! how unſeemly is it for them that profeſs friendſhip to Chriſt and his cauſe, to dwell with enemies, or to be in their camps? O! Sirs, either quit enemies camps, or elſe quit your profeſſion.

(3.) Reaſon was, becauſe, in the words read, the prophet was declaring that Jeſus Chriſt was ſent of his Father to theſe nations, *viz.* Babylon, that had ſpoiled the children of Iſrael, to puniſh them; therefore it was not ſafe for them to tarry among them: For, theſe that are in enemies camps, when he comes to puniſh them, they ſhall drink of their cup; and this reaſon was enlarged in the 9th verſe, *Behold, I will ſhake mine hand upon them, and they ſhall be a ſpoil to their ſervants:* Whereby he ſheweth, how eaſy a thing it was for him to bring them down, and how ignominious their ſtroke ſhould be, if they were found amongſt them.

2. It is applied to theſe who were at Jeruſalem; for, their encouragement is in ver. 10, 11, 12, *&c.*

3. It is applied to adverſaries, and brought in againſt them, whether oppreſſors of his people, or oppoſers of his work, or adverſaries to God, by miſbelief of his on-carrying of his work, as verſe 13. *Be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord.* So, he will have adverſaries to ſilence their boaſting, and he will have unbelievers to ſilence their unbelief and doubts, or their faithleſſneſs.

And

And as for the diviſion of the words, they were divided into five particulars:

1. That Chriſt is the faithful interpreter of the Father's will.

2. That he is ſent of the Father to ſee the Father's will executed.

3. The time when, *viz. After the glory*, that is, after that he had viſited his people, which is his glory, with affliction; or after he had begun to manifeſt his glory, in their begun reſtoration: then is he ſent to puniſh the nations, that they might not hinder the carrying on of his work.

4. There is the cauſe, *viz.* becauſe they had ſpoiled his people.

5 The reaſon thereof, which is drawn from his ſympathy with them, to wit, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

The firſt three were ſpoken ſomewhat to already; ſo, then, I proceed to the fourth, which is the cauſe of Chriſt's being ſent unto the nations, to puniſh them; and that was, becauſe they had ſpoiled his people: Whence I lay down this doctrine,

DOCT. *That the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the avenger of his people's quarrel, and he will recompence the wrongs done unto his people.* For, he is here ſent to puniſh the nations, becauſe they had ſpoiled his people: See alſo, Deut. xxxii 34, 35, 36. "Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed up a-"mongſt my treaſures? To me belongeth vengeance and re-"compence: Their feet ſhall ſlide in due time; for the day "of their calamity is at hand; and the things that ſhall come "upon them make haſte: For the Lord ſhall judge his peo-"ple, and repent himſelf for his ſervants, when he ſeeth that "their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left." So then, he is the avenger of his people's quarrel, and he will be their glory: Whence he ſays, Iſa. i. 24. "Ah! I will "eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and evenge me of mine ene-"mies." For he takes it as a great affront and indignity done unto him, to deny him of his glory, even of the glory of his vengeance: For, ſaith he, Amos iii. 6. "Shall there be evil "in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" He looks down from heaven, as it were, and hears them even telling who hath done this evil, and who hath done that: and he takes it as a great affront and indignity done to him, when it is attributed to another: But, beloved, this is not meant of the evil of ſin; for he is altogether free of it, and uncapable of ſin; but it is meant of the evil of puniſhment; for, *to me belongs vengeance, ſaith he, therefore their foot ſhall ſlide in due time.*

Now,

Now in profecuting or ſpeaking to this doctrine, I ſhall,

I. Shew you ſome ſorts of folk, againſt whom God will avenge his people's quarrel.

II. I ſhall give you ſome reaſons of the doctrine.

III. I ſhall add ſome uſes.

I. I ſay, God will avenge his church and people's quarrel againſt all theſe that wrong his church and people; and under theſe, I may comprehend five ſorts of folk: Such as,

1. Open and avowed enemies or perſecutors: Theſe are they, againſt whom God will avenge his church and people's quarrel; *After the glory hath he ſent me to the nations that ſpoiled you*, viz. the nations that were open and avowed enemies to the Iſraelites, and that ſpoiled and robbed his people. Alſo ſee Zech. i. 21. and you will there ſee how he avengeth his church and people's quarrel: and how doth he it? There is a viſion preſented to the prophet, of four *horns*, ſignifying the church's enemies, coming from the four corners of the earth, that ſpoiled their country. Then there are four carpenters ſhown him, ſignifying a ſufficiency of inſtruments in the Lord's hand: and what were theſe to do? Theſe were to break the horns, and to avenge God's quarrel on theſe enemies, that had ſpoiled his people: Theſe had lifted up their heads againſt his church; therefore he ſent carpenters, or, ſufficiency of inſtruments, to cut of their power. I ſay then, againſt open enemies, he will avenge his church's quarrel; becauſe their main work and ſtudy was, to make havock of the church, and to bring his church and people under their feet at their pleaſure Then, I ſay, in that day ſhall the wicked tyrant on the throne be paid home for all the wrongs that he and his accomplices have done unto the church; he ſhall be paid home, and they for joining with him together, in oppreſſing the conſciences, perſons and eſtates of his people: Then ſhall they be paid home; *for, thus ſaith the Lord, I will puniſh them according to the fruit of their doings.*

2. The ſecond ſort, againſt whom the Lord will avenge his church's quarrel, are, peace-makers with the enemies of his church and people; againſt theſe he will avenge his church's quarrel, and he will recompenſe the wrongs that they have done to his church and people, Iſa. viii. 12, 13. *Say ye not, A confederacy to all them to whom his people ſhall ſay, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and let him be your fear, and your dread.* I ſay, he will be avenged on all confederators, and peace-makers with the enemies of his church; for they have choſen enemies to be their ſociety, and have disjoined themſelves from the members of Jeſus Chriſt: For what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? Their covenant with death and hell ſhall not ſtand. When God brings the overflowing ſcourge, that ſhall overflow the hiding place of the wicked, and ſweeps away

way the wall that people have built to themſelves, and daubed with untempered mortar. Then it ſhall be ſaid, Where is the wall and the builders thereof? And their covenant with hell and death ſhall not ſtand; for God will avenge his church's quarrel, upon theſe peace-makers with enemies; for he hath ſaid, There is no peace to the wicked. Then ſhall all theſe that have taken protection and abſolvitures, be paid home for the wrongs they have done to his church and people: *For, thus ſaith the Lord, I will puniſh them according to the fruit of their doings.*

3. The third ſort of folk, againſt whom the Lord will avenge his church's quarrel, are upholders and aſſiſters or enemies; againſt ſuch he will avenge his church's quarrel, Ezek. xvii. 21. *And all his fugitives, with all his bands, ſhall fall by the ſword.* And Judges ix. 23, 24. *Then God ſent an evil ſpirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem, and the men of Shechem dealt treacherouſly with Abimelech, that the cruelty done to the ſeventy ſons of Jerubaal might come upon Abimelech, and their blood be laid on him that ſlew them, and on the men of Shechem, who aided him in killing of his brethren.* So, then, I ſay, againſt upholders and aſſiſters of enemies of his church and people, God will be avenged, for the wrongs they have done to his people; for they have put arms in the enemies hands, and have joined with them in diſplaying of a banner againſt the Lord: Then, and in that day, ſhall ceſs-payers and locality-payers be paid home, for the wrongs that they have done, in putting arms in enemies hands, to fight againſt the Lord and his people; yea, they have armed enemies againſt the Lord himſelf. Then ſhall militia-money-payers be paid home, for what they have done; for they have armed men to uphold that ſupremacy, whereby a wretch hath robed Jeſus Chriſt: For that is declared to be the very end, for which the militia-money was up-liſted, by their act of parliament. Then ſhall teind payers be paid home, for what they have done; for they have upholden a corrupt worſhip in the land: *Thus ſaith the Lord, they ſhall be rewarded according to the fruit of their doings.*

4. The fourth ſort of folk, that God will avenge his church and people's quarrel upon, are juſtifiers of the enemies of God: They that juſtify the enemies of the work of God, whom God will never juſtify, ſhall be paid home for it, Pſal. ci. 3. *I hate the work of them that turn aſide, it ſhall not cleave to me;* And to ſuch our Lord ſaith, *I know you not, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, for I acknowledge you not, I juſtify you not:* So, God will never juſtify enemies, for the wrongs they have done to his church, nor ſuch as juſtify enemies: who by their practice declare that enemies are in the right, and

that

that the Lord's people are worthy of all that they are meeting with from the enemies hands. Then, I ſay, that in that day capitulaters with enemies ſhall be paid home, they that enter into capitulations with enemies, and theſe that juſtify enemies in their proceedings, who ſay, upon the matter, that that which they once looked upon as their duty, they now ſee it to be their ſin; or by their compliance ſay, that the Lord's people are in the wrong, and in the tranſgreſſion; theſe ſhall be paid home. O! Sirs, think ye that that is ſuffering, to give ſo much of your goods to the enemy? Nay, nay, it is rather a giving away your goods with your own hand, by free choice; and, by your ſo doing, ye condemn your duty, and juſtify the enemy; for, if ye be not in the tranſgreſſion, why do ye concur with the enemies in puniſhing yourſelves? Chriſt is ſent to puniſh the nations that ſpoiled you; but fine-payers cannot ſay they are ſpoiled, for they ſpoil themſelves.

5. The fifth ſort of folk, that the Lord will avenge his church and people's quarrel upon, are theſe ſpoken of, Zeph. i. 5. *That ſwear by the Lord, and that ſwear by Malcham;* theſe that will not ſide themſelves with the church of God, nor yet againſt the church of God: Theſe were a company of folk, that halted between God and Malcham their idol; who would not ſeek the Lord fully: Theſe the Lord will cut off, becauſe of the wrongs that they had done to him; for thereby they deny the church their aſſiſtance, they deny the obligation of the covenants, whereby they are bound to take their lot with the common cauſe, whereby they are bound to defend all in covenant: But, believe me there is nothing but one of two for ſuch; either to Chriſt's camps or enemies camps: This is the language of this trial that is going through the land, who is on the Lord's ſide? Who? And there is none but one of two, either for the Lord's camps, or enemies camps: And, againſt you that will not join with him, his cauſe and people, he will avenge the quarrel of his church and people upon you. Remember what he ſays, Matth. xii. 30. *He that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth abroad.* Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord, I will puniſh you for all your iniquities. And now, I fear, that there are many of you here, againſt whom the Lord will avenge his church and peoples quarrel, for all the wrongs and injuries ye have done unto him: And, O! what will ye do, when ye have God a party againſt you? for he will be againſt thoſe that are againſt his church, and that wrong his church and people. But,

II. I would give you ſome reaſons, wherefore the Lord Jeſus Chriſt doth avenge his church and people's quarrel: And,

1. The

1. The firſt reaſon, is becauſe of their intereſt in him, Hoſea xii. 9. *And I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the ſolemn feaſt.* So, he is the God of his people, and his people are intereſted in him, and therefore he will avenge their quarrel; for upon the account of their being intereſted in him, their quarrel becomes his quarrel, as you have it in Iſa. i. 24. *Ah! I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies:* So, he counts his people's adverſaries his adverſaries; and therefore he reputes the wrongs done unto them, as done unto himſelf: As alſo ye may ſee in the 25th chapter of Matthew; where Chriſt makes a ſeparation between the ſheep and the goats; he ſays to the goats, "Depart from me, ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for "the devil and his angels: For, I was an hungred, and ye "gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; "I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye "clothed me not; ſick, and in priſon and ye viſited me "not:" And his anſwer to their objection, is, "In as much "as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it not to "me." So, that which is done to Chriſt's people, he counts it as done to himſelf, becauſe they wrong a people intereſted in himſelf, whoſe wrongs he takes as done unto himſelf: and therefore they ſhall not eſcape, but he will puniſh them for the wrongs done to his church and people.

2. The ſecond reaſon is this, becauſe of his ſympathy with his people; "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of "his eye." This is alſo proven from Heb. iv. 15. "For we "have not an High Prieſt which cannot be touched with the "feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted, "like as we are, yet without ſin;" *viz.* Jeſus Chriſt, who hath a ſympathy with all his people's wrongs, for he that toucheth you in any place, toucheth the apple of his eye, which is the tendereſt part of the body. And, believe me, ſirs, the greater the wrongs be that his people are enduring, the greater way is made for ſhewing of his bowels of his ſympathy; and the greater wrongs they ſuffer, they ly the nearer to his heart: and he will puniſh the injuries done unto theſe, according to the fruit of their doings.

3. The third reaſon, is, becauſe of his holineſs; for, ſince he is a holy God, therefore he will pay enemies home, that this may be no imputation to his holineſs, Hab. i. 13 where the prophet conſidering God's holineſs, concludes, ſaying, *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* So, from this he concludes, that Babylon ſhall not be unpuniſhed.

4. The fourth reaſon may be drawn from his faithfulneſs: He who hath ſaid, Iſa. i. 24. *Ah! I will eaſe me of mine ad-*

verſaries, &c. hath alſo ſaid, Jer. ii. 37. *For the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou ſhalt not proſper in them.* For, as the Lord is both a holy and a faithful God, and hath ſo manifeſted himſelf in fulfilling his promiſes to and for his people; ſo alſo he is faithful in executing his judgments againſt their enemies; becauſe he is a faithful God, therefore he will puniſh their adverſaries.

5. The fifth reaſon may be drawn from his juſtice, Pſalm l. 6. *For God is judge himſelf.* God is a righteous Judge, who judgeth the world in righteouſneſs, and the people with equity and truth: Therefore he will puniſh his enemies, for all the wrongs they have done to his people. There is groſs wickedneſs gone out from the pretended judges of the land; ſo that the judgment-ſeats of the land are become ſeats of iniquity, inſtead of juſtice; therefore the Lord muſt ſet up his courts and paſs ſentences of equity. He will judge wicked enemies of the land, of all ſorts and ranks, for all the iniquities they have done. Many a wrong ſentence hath been paſt in theſe lands, theſe twenty-two years by-gone: but when he comes, he will paſs a juſt ſentence againſt theſe ſentences of his people. O! then, you may be aſſured, that he will be avenged upon his enemies, even upon the injurers of his people; and hence I may lay home this doctrine by ſome uſes.

1. The firſt uſe we come to, is, an uſe of inſtruction: Is it ſo that Chriſt avengeth his church's quarrel? then, hence learn the caſe of thoſe who are the objects of his vengeance. O! is it not a miſerable caſe and condition, to have the Almighty for a party againſt them, to have him coming as an armed man againſt them? Now, this is the caſe of the enemies of the church: O! then it is not a weak party that they have to do with; for it is God Almighty, the Lord of hoſts, whoſe arm is an everlaſting ſtrength; yea, they have the terrible majeſty of heaven and earth for their party; they have God againſt them, who is a man of war. O! how will theſe poor bits and atoms of clay ſtand before his cloke of zeal, and garments of vengeance? When Chriſt is mounting upon his red horſe of vengeance, he will ride through Scotland, and make them a miſerable party, for wronging his church, cauſe, and people.

2. A ſecond uſe of inſtruction: Is it ſo, that the Lord will be our enemies party? then, learn the happy caſe and condition of thoſe whoſe quarrel he will avenge: Happy are thoſe; for they have God on their ſide, they have infinite love, putting infinite power in execution for them; what made the Pſalmiſt cry out, Pſalm xlvi. 2. "Therefore will "not we fear, though the earth be moved, and though the "mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea." It was even

becauſe

becauſe he could alſo ſay, ver. 7. "The Lord of hoſts is with "us, the God of Jacob is our refuge." O! then, if God be with us, and for us, who can be againſt us? Surely they are a happy people whom God doth ſide with, or, who have the Lord of hoſts upon their ſide; who have his love putting his power in execution for them, upon the objects of his vengeance.

3. The third uſe is, of exhortation: Would ye be among thoſe whoſe quarrel the Lord avengeth? then, come, and receive him, and make up a contract with him; and give over yourſelves to him, both ſouls and bodies, to be his, and for him; and here in his name, I offer him to you, and his all to you; come take him. Lo! here is a rich bargain, a mutual intereſt betwixt Chriſt and ſinners O! my friends, go not away as fools from ſuch an offer: Here Jeſus Chriſt is holding forth his willingneſs, to enter into this noble bargain with you. O! he requires the ſubſcribing of your conſent to the bargain: Are ye willing; for, indeed, he hath ſubſcribed his conſent to the bargain, with letters of his own blood: Therefore be intreated to come, and join yourſelves to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Come, and receive a crucified Saviour; come, and partake of his ſalvation, a bloody Saviour! come, O! come unto him and take his ſalvation off his hand; for, theſe who join with him, are they whoſe cauſe and quarrel he will avenge, and whoſe wrongs and injuries he will recompenſe upon enemies, their own heads.

4. The fourth uſe is, of conſolation: O! then well's you that are his people, whoſe quarrel he will avenge. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; be ye comforted and encouraged in him, for he will avenge your quarrel: Though now ye be ſuffering under the feet of enemies and perſecutors, God is marking down every *item* of the wrongs done to you; and the day is coming, when, "the righteous ſhall rejoice; when "he ſeeth the vengeance, he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood "of the wicked; ſo that a man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a "reward for the righteous, verily he is a God that judgeth "in the earth," Pſalm lviii. 10, 11. Then rejoice and be comforted, ye who are his people; for ye have him to take your part, againſt all that ſet themſelves againſt you: Ye who are his people, his holy ones, rejoice in this and be glad. Be not anxious anent enemies; for he will pay them home in their own coin: He will avenge your quarrel or rather his own quarrel, in yours: So then, regard them not; God is a party great enough for them all: Envy them not, for their caſe is miſerable. The Lord is a man of war, who is againſt them, and is their enemy; and, if he be againſt them, and their enemy, it matters not who be their friend; he is a powerful

enemy. Whatever outward prevailing they may have for a time, yet envy them not, ſeeing they have God for their party, but rather rejoice ye in him, ye who are his people, whoſe quarrel he is coming to avenge, eſpouſe and own. Comfort yourſelves in this, that God is the avenger of your quarrel, and recompenſer of your injuries and wrongs. Rejoice in him, and be exceeding glad; for he hath ſaid, Vengeance is his, and with him it is laid up in ſtore, and ſealed among his treaſures, Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. He will repay them; rejoice in him, who judgeth the earth in righteouſneſs: For David inviteth all things to rejoice, becauſe he cometh to judge the world in righteouſneſs: Let all creatures rejoice in him; let ſun, moon, and ſtars, rejoice in him, who judgeth the world in righteouſneſs, and his people in equity. O all ye his ſaint! praiſe ye him. To him be praiſe. *Amen.*

PREFACE.

MY friends ye have need to know what is your errand here this time; for, there are many things that call to it:

1. The authority of God that calls you to it; for he hath ſaid, *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live:* I ſay, the authority of heaven, calls you to know this, what ye are ſeeking. O ſirs! greatneſs, goodneſs and meekneſs, meet all in him, who hath ſaid this, *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live;* and therefore, ye are called by his authority, to know what ye are ſeeking.

2. The certainty of judgment: This calls you to know what is your errand here; and what ye are ſeeking, even the certainty of judgment; becauſe, at that day, this will be one of the interrogations that will be inquired at you, man and woman, where were you ſuch a day or time? And, what was you ſeeking in ſuch a place, and at ſuch an occaſion? O! then, ſee to it, and conſider how ye will anſwer to the great Judge, when he aſks the queſtion.

3. There is this that calls you to know what is your errand and what ye are ſeeking here, even the difficulties of your coming here, in the hazard of your lives; I ſay, this calls

calls you to know what ye are ſeeking, in your going or coming ſuch errands. O! I ſay, the hazard and difficulties that ye are put to, in your coming here, call you to know what ye are ſeeking here.

4. This calls you to know your errand, and what ye are ſeeking here: The great diſcouragements ye meet with in the way, this calls you to know your errand here: I ſay, people that go and run ſuch errands and ways, over and through ſo many difficulties and diſcouragements, had need to know what they are ſeeking, at this or the like occaſion. Your night-wanderings, your uncertain journies, your wearineſs and cold, *&c.* call you to know your errand here; therefore, I intreat you, try yourſelves, what is your errand? And I ſhall tell you of five ſorts of folk, that have not a right errand and end before them, in their coming here at this occaſion:

(1.) The firſt ſort are, theſe that come for a name of ſelf-credit; ſuch, I ſay, their errand is not good nor right. But, ye will poſſibly object and ſay, Will any be ſuch fools, as to come here over ſuch difficulties and hazards, for by-ends, ſelf-ends, or ſelf-credit? I anſwer, I do affirm, they may do more than this; and that even for ſelf credit, and for a name; for Paul ſuppoſeth that a man may give his goods to the poor, and his body to be burnt; and yet, if he want charity, he hath nothing. And I do not underſtand, neither can it be condeſcended upon, what it can be, that can move a man or woman, to go that length, if it be not ſelf-credit; the world cannot do it; for he loſeth the enjoyment thereof, when he doth as the apoſtle inſinuates. Riches cannot do it, for they are a part of the man's world Then ſeeing that the enjoyment of the world cannot do it, nothing elſe can do it but ſelf-credit: And ſo, I ſay, ſuch as ſeek that, have not a right end before them.

(2.) The ſecond ſort of folk, that have not a right end or errand before them, in their here-coming, are theſe who are ſeeking ordinances; and I fear, many of you have no better end here to-day, than to hear a preaching; but, if this be your end, ye will not be profiters by your here-coming: *For thus ſaith the Lord, ſeek ye me, but ſeek not Bethel, for Bethel ſhall go into captivity*, &c. What can ordinances do unto you, that have not the Lord in them? O then, ſeek unto the God of ordinances! Ah! hath not the Lord taught Scotland, that ordinances are but ſhadows in themſelves? And, hath he not taught you this, by depriving you of ordinances? O! therefore, ſeek that which ye cannot be deprived of; ſeek the Lord. It is people's duty, indeed, to ſee ordinances, and to ſeek to them; but, above all, to ſeek to have himſelf in the ordinances. So then, let it be the Lord, that ye ſeek in the ordinances, or elſe ye do nothing, and may ſoon be deprived

of

of them; for, ye ſee now, that ye may be deprived of ordinances. Do, then, as David did, when he was deprived of ordinances, who ſaid, Pſal. xlii. 2. *My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God.* It was not after ordinances, not after the temple-worſhip, nor after the ſanctuary and ſolemnities thereof, ſo much, as it was after the living God, who was to be found in theſe ordinances, and in the ſanctuary, that he thirſted.

(3.) the third ſort of folk, that have not a right end and errand before them, in their here coming, are theſe who are come to ſeek flaſhes and frames. There are many that ſeek no further, if they can get their hands full of ſenſe, or their ſenſual appetites ſatisfied with the ſmell of Chriſt's garments: Many of you ſeek no farther than that; ye may think this ſtrange, but, I ſay, ſirs, Chriſt may come and be preſent with, and in his ordinances: and ſome may find the ſmell of his garments there, and yet never get more good of him. Ay, ſirs, flaſhes and frames are deceitful things; therefore beguile not yourſelves with them; for, if this be your errand, ye will not be profiters by your coming here.

(4.) The fourth ſort of folk that have not a right errand in coming here, are theſe who are come to ſeek created grace, or falſe grace; this indeed is a more ſubtile deceit than many of the reſt. What is created grace? It is nothing: It is like temporary faith; it is not that which will uphold you, and carry you through to the end; of itſelf it can do nothing. The poor creature can do nothing without continual ſupplies out of the fountain of God's bounty, love and affection. So then, I may ſay, created grace is nothing elſe but ſome certain evidence, that the Lord is become the portion of that ſoul, without his word. But, my friends, ſeek himſelf, and get himſelf, and ye ſhall not want evidence of it. It was well ſaid by the pſalmiſt, *Whom have I in the heavens but thee? or in the earth, that I deſire beſides thee?* Mark it, ſirs, he doth not ſay, Whom have I in heaven but thy grace, or thy ſtrength? &c. but, it is thyſelf. And, Pſal. xlii. 2. *My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God.* Whatever other things could have been offered him, would not have ſatisfied him, in his hungering and longing condition; nothing leſs would do it, than a living God himſelf, who is infinite. O but he had broad deſires! O that there were ſuch deſires among you this day!

(5.) The fifth ſort of folk that hath not a right errand or end before them, in their here-coming, and they are theſe that are come to ſeek the Lord, not for himſelf only, but for ſome other by-end. Many deſire to know the Lord, and delight to ſeek him; and yet never win over the march ſtone, betwixt chriſtianity and hypocriſy: I ſay, they may do this,

and

and yet never win over the march-ſtone betwixt the two. They may ſeek the Lord, but not for himſelf. They may delight themſelves in the knowledge of God, as others in their vain ſpeculations or other ſciences; and yet not win without the flood-mark of his wrath, and beyond hypocriſy. So, then, ſuch ſeekers, as ſeek God, but not for himſelf, may expect a refuſal at his hand. A rational Chriſtian will ſay, that God cannot love any ſuch. Do ye think in reaſon, that any would condeſcend to a ſuiter, that was only ſeeking the means, and not the perſon? And, do ye not think that it were rational in the other, to reject ſuch ſpurious love, that ſeeks them for theirs, and not for themſelves? Even ſo will Chriſt do with all ſuch, that ſeek him for what is his, and not for his gracious and glorious ſelf: For it is not Chriſt that they are ſeeking, but what Chriſt hath. O! therefore, ſeek himſelf, and nothing but himſelf; according to that word, *Seek ye me, and ye ſhall live.* Now, let this be your errand here this day; and pray that he may be found of us.

SERMON XIII.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

MY friends, God maketh himſelf known many ways, both in his works of creation, and his works of providence; heaven and earth publiſh and preach forth the knowledge of God; ſun, moon, and ſtars, are all written over in legible characters, teaching us the knowledge of God; the earth, trees, mountains, hills, and vallies, yea, and piles of graſs are all written over, back-ſide and fore-ſide, with legible characters of the knowledge of God; the blind and deaf creatures that can neither ſee nor hear, preach unto us the being of a God; but, above all, he declares his love to us, in that glorious work of redemption; God ſo loved the world that he gave his only begotten ſon for the ſame: *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,*

John

John xv. 13. O! how is his love here made known! O his condeſcendency! that he who was and is the prince of glory, ſhould have left the father's boſom, and the glory of heaven, and ſhould have come to earth, to ſave poor loſt ſinners. And how was his juſtice made known? For ſo it was, that ere ſin in the elect paſſed unpuniſhed, he would puniſh it in their head, in the Son of his love, Jeſus Chriſt: So, the work of redemption, if duly conſidered, is the greateſt preaching of juſtice and mercy that ever was preached. So, then, would ye ſee God's indignation againſt ſin? It is in the work of redemption; for he had ſuch hatred at ſin, that, before it paſs unpuniſhed, he will puniſh it in him who knew no ſin; and ſo may be ſaid of his mercy, by looking into the covenant of redemption. So then, God is known by his works of wonders unto his people. How did he make himſelf known to the children of Iſrael in the wilderneſs, and that many ways? He fed them with manna from heaven; he gave them water to drink out of the hard flinty rock; he divided the ſwellings of Jordan, that he might make a paſſage for them to the promiſed land, and divided the Red-ſea, *&c.* All theſe wonders make him known. And moreover, he makes himſelf known by works of wonders againſt enemies, Pſal ix. 16. *The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: The wicked are ſnared in the work of their own hands.* I ſay, the Lord is known in executing judgment on enemies, and bringing down judgment upon them, in ſuch a way, as their own hands are ſeen in drawing judgments upon them: *For thus ſaith the Lord, After the glory,* &c.

I intend not now to reſume what formerly hath been ſaid from theſe words; and now, paſſing by the connection, I ſhall only name briefly what theſe words contain, *viz.* five particulars.

1. That Chriſt is the Father's interpreter, and the faithful interpreter of the Father's will.

2. That he is ſent of the Father to ſee his will executed, and employed by him againſt enemies.

3. The time to puniſh his enemies, *viz. After the glory,* &c. that is, after that the Lord had manifeſted his glory, in the begun reſtoration of his work and people, and bringing down his enemies.

4. There is the *cauſe*, viz. becauſe they had ſpoiled his people.

5. There is the *reaſon* of it, which is taken from his ſympathy with his people, in this, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

Now, having, in ſome meaſure, handled the firſt three heads, I proceed to the *fourth*, viz. the *cauſe* why Chriſt is ſent

ſent to his enemies, becauſe they had *ſpoiled* his people: And from this I laid down this doctrine.

DOCT. *That Chriſt is the avenger of his people's quarrels, and the recompenſer of the injuries done unto them:* Which doctrine was a little ſpoken to, and enlarged, by ſhewing ſome ſorts of folk, againſt whom Chriſt will avenge his church and people's quarrel; and I gave ſome reaſons of it; and it was laid home by ſome uſes: And now, I proceed, to a ſecond doctrine from the ſame head, which is this:

DOCT. II. *That God makes uſe of theſe ſame ways, that enemies take for eſtabliſhing and advancing themſelves, as means and cauſes of bringing them down.* Theſe enemies ſpoiled his people, to make up themſelves; but, what comes of it? Chriſt is employed in his cloke of zeal, and garments of vengeance, againſt them: He is mounting the red horſe of ſeverity; which is clear from ſeveral inſtances that I may mention, as that of Pharaoh, how the Lord made uſe of that means, whereby he thought to eſtabliſh himſelf, on the ruins of the church of God, as a mean of his utter overthrow; he purſued the Iſraelites to the Red-ſea, and, in effect, ſays, Now I have them in a hoſe-net; but the Lord made uſe of that as a mean to bring them down headlong into deſtruction and ruin.

Likewiſe this is clear from Haman: He thought no doubt that he would get his eyes ſatisfied and pleaſed with Mordecai's death; and for this effect he ſets up a pair of gallows to hang Mordecai on; but yet, for all that, he was hanged thereon himſelf: Even ſo, little know enemies, that their proceedings againſt the godly, is a ſetting up of gallowſes, and twining the ropes to hang themſelves with: And yet, in effect, it is no leſs; for God makes uſe of theſe means and ways, that they take for eſtabliſhing themſelves, as a mean to overthrow them: Yea, and was it not ſo with Abimelech, and the men of Shechem? For he, that he might bring about the kingdom to himſelf, imployed the men of Shechem to help him in the killing of his brethren: And lo, becauſe of this, the Lord ſent an evil ſpirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; ſo that they got no reſt for it, till fire went out from the men of Shechem, and deſtroyed Abimelech; and this he got for his way of eſtabliſhing himſelf in the kingdom. How many times doth God make uſe of the means that enemies take for their own eſtabliſhment, and advancing themſelves, as means of their overthrow?

This is likewiſe confirmed and made out on the preſidents and princes of the king of Babylon, who, to promote themſelves in the king's favour, ſought out means to deſtroy Daniel, which proved their own overthrow: Hence it doth ap-

pear, that the means of wicked mens advancement, is a mean made uſe of for their overthrow.

Indeed there is a corrupt company in this generation, who have uſed many indirect means to eſtabliſh themſelves, and to keep themſeves in peace in this time; but he ſhall uſe theſe means to bring them down, and to bring his curſe upon their poſterity. What need I mention inſtances to make this appear? And yet this is a truth, ſo hard to be believed, that moſt of men will ſcarce be perſuaded of the truth of the ſame; and ſo, to perſuade you, I make mention of theſe inſtances. Remember alſo, what became of the apoſtate Iſraelites, for joining with the Egyptians: Say they, *We will join with the Egyptian, for they have men and chariots.* But they became a mean of their deſtruction; for the king of Babylon counted this as a muſtering of their forces, and reputed that confederacy a cauſe of his breaking that bond of protection he had granted to them; and therefore he departed not from their borders, nor left off contending with them, until he went through the length and breadth of their land, to their great hurt and total ruin. It is ſaid, that *he alſo is wiſe:* They thought themſelves wiſe; but the Lord is more wiſe than the Iſraelites; for he made their wiſdom to appear to be but folly: He will ariſe againſt the help of them that work iniquity, Iſa. xxxi. 1, 2, 3. Their ſinful confederacy was a mean of bringing them down. O! how doth the Lord make himſelf known by his judgments, in bringing down the enemies in ſuch ways? *The Lord is known in the judgments which he executeth; for the wicked are ſnared in the work of their own hands, Higgaion! Selah,* Pſal. ix. 16. See alſo Rev. xiv 8. *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, becauſe ſhe made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.* Babylon thinks now to eſtabliſh herſelf as a queen, by the wine of her fornication, given into the hands of many people; but the Lord hath and will make that the cauſe of her ruin, and will have it voiced with a double voice, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* And it is ſaid, they that gave their power to the beaſt, ſhall burn her fleſh with fire; and thoſe that ſerved her, ſhall be the inſtruments to pull her down. Believe me, whatever way people take for advancing themſelves, by ſinning againſt God, the Lord will make uſe of that very ſame way, to bring them down: So then, when people go out of God's way, to eſtabliſh themſelves, he will make uſe of that very ſame way, to bring them down; ſo that they ſhall not only be diſappointed, but they ſhall meet with the quite contrary. O! then, what think ye of enemies doings, of their mounting their forces to pull Chriſt down from his throne? Believe it, they are thereby ſetting up Chriſt's throne, and pulling down themſelves: However they think now, yet it ſhall be ſeen in the hinder end of the day. Alſo, what are com-

compliers doing, by ſhadowing themſelves under enemies wings? Indeed, they are drawing down judgments on themſelves, as it were with both hands: For, when he comes againſt them that ſpoil his church, they that are ſheltering under their ſhadow, ſhall not eſcape; yea, they ſhall find that they have made a bad choice; for God, when he puts the cup of trembling, and of his indignation, in enemies hands, they ſhall not miſs. But, to enlarge a little into ſo neceſſary a point, that is ſo hard to be believed, let me ſpecify ſome ways that God makes uſe of to bring down enemies, when they are ſeeking thereby to eſtabliſh themſelves; As,

1. God makes uſe of the cruelty of enemies againſt his church and people, for a mean of bringing them down; they uſe their cruelty againſt his people to advance themſelves: But he uſeth it as a mean to bring down and deſtroy them, Amos i. 13. "Thus ſaith the Lord, for three tranſgreſſions "of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn "away the puniſhment thereof; becauſe they have ript up "the woman with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge "their border:" But the Lord uſed that cruelty as a mean to bring the fire of his fury upon them: So then, all the enemies cruelty that they have uſed in this generation againſt you, will be made uſe of by the Lord, as a mean to bring them down; for it will be as a ſpecial crying ſin againſt them, to bring wrath down upon them: It will not be ſilent, until he pour out his wrath and indignation upon his enemies: I ſay, the Lord will make uſe of the cruelty that is uſed againſt your bodies, conſciences, and eſtates, as a mean to bring them down: Their ſins and their cruelty will have a loud cry to heaven; and will not be ſilent, until he come with wrath upon this cruel generation: The cruelty of their proceedings, in the abſtract, it ſpeaks forth, not only their being void of Chriſtianity, but alſo of humanity; for, by their cruelty they think to get all brought under them; but the time comes, when God ſhall make himſelf known by the judgment which he will execute upon them; for, as he is infinite, ſo he is more powerful than they, and ſhall make uſe of all theſe means, which they are making uſe of to eſtabliſh themſelves, as a mean to overthrow them.

2. He makes uſe of the oppreſſion of enemies, that they uſe for eſtabliſhing themſelves, as a mean to overthrow them: See, for proof of this, Mic. ii. 1, 2. "Wo to them that de-"viſe iniquity——and they covet fields, and take them by vio-"lence, and houſes, and take them away: So they oppreſs a "man and his houſe, even a man and his heritage." And this they did, to enlarge their border: But, behold, what follows, verſe 3. "Therefore, thus ſaith the Lord, againſt

" this family do I deviſe an evil, from which ye ſhall not re-
" move your necks." So little know the wicked perſecutors and oppreſſors, that their oppreſſions that they think to advance themſelves by, that it ſhall be made a mean to bring them down, and to bring a heavy yoke upon their neck; For, ſo it was here; theſe enemies oppreſt the Iſraelites, to profit themſelves; but the Lord made uſe of that, as a mean to bring them down: Think not then, when they come to ſpoil you, that it will advance and ſtrengthen them; nay, nay, it ſhall not be ſo; but rather a mean to weaken them; for he that is infinite in wiſdom, is infinite in power; he knows how to make uſe of their oppreſſion, as a mean to bring them down.

3. He makes uſe of their treachery againſt the people of God, which they make uſe of as a mean to advance themſelves, as a mean to bring them down, Amos i. 9. *Thus ſaith the Lord, for three tranſgreſſions of Tyrus, and for four, I will turn away the puniſhment thereof; becauſe they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembred not the brotherly covenant.* There was a brotherly covenant between Solomon and Hiram, or between the Iſraelites and Tyrians; but the Tyrians delivered up the whole captivity of Edom, and remembred not the brotherly covenant; and ſo they carried very treacherouſly therein; and this the Lord makes uſe of, as a mean of their ruin, and looks on it as a cope-ſtone ſin, whereby they declared themſelves to be completely fitted for judgments; and therefore he kindles a fire in Tyrus, which did devour the palaces thereof: Even ſo, our enemies, by breaking the covenant, think to eſtabliſh themſelves; but that ſhall certainly be a mean to bring them down: The Lord will make uſe of their cruel treachery in end, as a mean of their weakening and ruin: Ay, they think now by their treachery to ſecure themſelves and their faction; but the Lord will uſe their treachery, as a mean of their ruin and downfall: For men who are unſtable as waters ſhall never excel; yea, the ſeed of evil doers ſhall never be renowned, or honoured, when walking in their fathers paths.

4. He makes uſe of their riches, whereby they think to eſtabliſh themſelves, as a mean to bring them down, Obad. v. 6. *If thieves come to thee, if robbers by night,——would they not have ſtolen till they had enough?—how are the things of Eſau ſearched out! how are his hid things ſought up!* Their riches in which they truſted, was then become a mean of their ruin; for they were as baits to allure their enemies to come in upon them; and ſo, that which they truſted in, and theſe things whereby they thought to eſtabliſh themſelves, the Lord made uſe of it to bring them down; I ſay, it was a bait for their enemies

enemies to make them good ſoldiers: So, let not enemies truſt in their riches or wealth, for that will be ſo far from ſecuring them from a ſtroke, that on the contrary, it ſhall bring a ſtroke upon them; So the Lord will uſe the wealth of enemies, and their riches, as a prey to theſe whom he will bring as inſtruments of judgments upon them; for they have uſed all theſe for his people's overthrow; therefore they ſhall prove their own overthrow.

5. He makes uſe of their wiſdom, which they uſe for eſtabliſhing themſelves, to tend to their overthrow; for, all their wit, policy, and politic plots, are by the Lord ſo framed, as to deſtroy them; as by this they had deſigned his people's ruin, and their own eſtabliſhment; yet he alſo is wiſe; ſo he makes their policy and wit to appear to be folly, by his making it a mean of their own overthrow. This is alſo clear from Obad. ver. 7. *All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border; the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed againſt thee; they that eat thy bread, have laid a wound under thee; there is none underſtanding in him.* The Edomites thought themſelves wiſe, by making confederacies with all enemies of the kirk round about them; and the Lord makes this as a mean to bring them down; the men of thy confederacy brought thee to the border of thy land, to fight there, and then went in and ſpoiled and robbed their land: They that eat thy bread, have robbed thee, and laid a wound under thee; they thought it good policy to bud and bribe enemies: But, what came of it? The enemies made them a bed, as it were, and ſet up naked daggers therein for the Edomites; ſo then, there is none underſtanding in them; ye may ſee then, how God will make uſe of wicked mens policy, as a mean to bring them down, and bring deſtruction on them: Ah! how greatly are many feared for enemies? But, I tell you, fear them not; for, all their meetings and conſultations are for their own ruin; all their plottings are for their own overthrow. It is even as one of them were ſaying to another, What way ſhall we take to bring a ſtroke upon ourſelves, ſo as nothing may be left undone, for bringing a ſad ſtroke on us? It is true, the language of their tongues, is, how ſhall we get ourſelves eſtabliſhed on the ruins of the church of Chriſt? and how ſhall we get all that party rooted out? how ſhall we get the name of preſbyterians rooted out of Scotland? But indeed, the language of the Lord's providence, by their purpoſes and projects, ſays quite the contrary; for indeed, that of their projects ſays, how ſhall we get the kingdom of Chriſt advanced? how ſhall we found preſbyterian government on a more ſolid foundation? This is the language which providence in their projects will ſpeak in the end,

6. The Lord makes uſe of the enemies ſtrength, as a mean to bring themſelves down; this is clear from Obad. ver. 2. "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee: Thou that "dwelleſt in the clefts of the rocks, whoſe habitation is high, "that ſaith in his heart, who ſhall bring me down to the "ground?" "ver. 9. And thy mighty men, O Teman, ſhall "be diſmayed, to the end that every one of the mount of "Eſau might be cut off by ſlaughter." They truſted in their ſtrong holds in the clefts of the rocks, whoſe habitation was on high mountains; and to the towers that they built on the tops of theſe mountains; but all theſe things were but things that deceived them; and the Lord made uſe of them, as things to bring them down. So, do not think that enemies ſtrength will ſecure them in the day of the Lord's controverſy; nay, nay, God ſhall make uſe of that for their overthrow and down bringing.

Now, to ſum up all, I would ſay this, whatever way folk take to eſtabliſh themſelves by, in corrupt courſes, or by ſtepping out of God's way, that ſame way God will make uſe of for their overthrow; for he that ſeeks to ſave his life ſhall loſe it; which may be underſtood thus, the very ſame way that men take ſinfully to ſave their lives, that very ſame way they ſhall loſe their lives: Believe me, the day is coming on theſe lands, when ſinful compliance ſhall neither ſave life nor gear; and the way which they take to ſave themſelves, by going out of God's way, ſhall be a mean to bring down the carcaſes of theſe men, who have taken ſinful courſes for their eſtabliſhment and ſafety; even their carcaſes ſhall be laid low in the duſt, and their gear ſhall go alſo. Now, let me lay home this by way of uſe, in four or five words, And,

1. The firſt uſe is for inſtruction; be ye inſtructed and aſſured, that God will make uſe of theſe things or means, which adverſaries are uſing for their own eſtabliſhment, as means in his hand for their overthrow; for, his wiſdom and power are engaged in it, or, for to do it; he is engaged to manifeſt his power againſt them, and he being wiſe and above them, is able to outwit them in all their policy, and to confound their counſels, and to make all their politicians to be but mere fools; and all their politics to appear to be but mere folly. They have ſet up a corrupt worſhip in the houſe of God to eſtabliſh themſelves, and for this very end have broken the covenant; but, believe me, it ſhall be with them, as it was with Betharbel, which was ſpoiled by Shallum; ſo ſhall their idolatrous Bethels do unto them; ſo ſhall their corrupt worſhip do unto them; yea, ſhall they break the covenant and proſper? They ſay they ſhall, but God ſays no: O! then, be aſſured of it, God ſhall make all their actings, as means to bring them down. Be not anxious about enemies then,

then for what they are conſulting againſt you and the Lord's work; for it is hard for them to kick againſt the pricks. It is hard to know what they are plotting; yea, it may be that they are deviſing to cut off men, woman, and children from the land; but yet, plot as they will, the Lord will make uſe of all their plots, as means to deſtroy and bring down themſelves.

2. The ſecond uſe is a word of reproof to adverſaries: Is it ſo, that God will make uſe of all the devices that enemies uſe to deſtroy and bring down the work of God, as means to deſtroy and bring down themſelves? Then, let not enemies rejoice in their cruelties, and deſperate proceedings againſt the church and people of God: O! fooliſh adverſaries, little are ye conſidering, that what ye do, and are purpoſing againſt the church, tends to advance the church, and ruin yourſelves; yea, theſe very means that they are taking to eſtabliſh themſelves, ſhall haſten on the day of deſtruction upon them: Then ſhall the righteous rejoice and be glad, when he ſeeth the vengeance on the wicked: ay, he ſhall waſh his feet in the blood of the wicked, Pſalm lviii. 10. Then ſhall it be ſeen, that it is good to wait on the Lord, though he ſhould come in the way of his judgments; for none ſhall be aſhamed, nor need to be afraid, that truſt in him; *Rejoice not againſt me, O! mine enemy*, &c. For there is not ſo much cauſe of rejoicing as they do fancy: I ſay, there is no cauſe of enemies inſulting, whatever they pretend to themſelves; and therefore, let not them rejoice, neither do ye regard it.

3. The third uſe is a word of reproof, to all who place their confidence in enemies: O! but ye have a brittle ſtaff to lean to, that have God's enemies to lean to, as the Iſraelites who leaned to the Egyptians; who were as a ſtaff when leaned to; that burſt aſſunder in ſheards, and thruſt through their hands that leaned to them: So ye rely on enemies, but what are they doing? Even as theſe, when ye look for ſafety from them, they are, as it were ſetting up a naked dagger under you, to wound your ſide. Ah! ah! people who ſtand with enemies ſtand on ſlippery ground; and they that deſire enemies to ſtand, that they may be ſecured by their ſtanding, do ſtand on a very ſlippery place: I would not be in the caſe of ſuch as ſtand and fall with enemies, for ten thouſand worlds. Be reproved, then, from this, ye that combine and aſſociate yourſelves with enemies; you who take their protection and abſolvitures, and place your confidence in them, ye think ye have ſafety under them; but that ſhelter will ſoon fail you; for the Lord will come and caſt them down, and bring them down, and that ſhadow will flee away; and ye that have built that wall, what will ye do when the overflowing ſhower comes, that ſhall ſweep away the wall, when

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the whirlwind of God's indignation ſhall come with pain upon the head of the wicked? Believe me, all within the reach of it ſhall be broken by it.

There is a foul and corrupt throne in Britain, and people flee in under the ſhadow thereof; but God hath a quiver full of arrows to ſhoot at it, and all under it ſhall fall when he that ſits on it falls. So then, this reproves you who are in enemies camps; all, who are ſtanding by and with enemies, know, that the way that they and you take ſhall bring you both down. O! that ye would remember the word, *Come out of her, my people, and be ye ſeparated, and touch no unclean thing, and be not partaker of her ſins;* for when God comes to reckon with Scotland in judgment, ye may ſay, I am a liar this day, if theſe men and women eſcape, who are taking the enemies protections and abſolutions; *Come therefore out of her, my people, and partake not of her ſins, leſt ye be ſharers in her plagues;* for plagues and ſin follow each other; they that partake of the one, ſhall (unleſs true and unfeigned repentance intervine) inevitably partake of the other; for he is faithful. who hath ſaid it, and will in due time perform it.

4. The fourth uſe is of conſolation, to all ſuch as are looking for the day of his appearing in the way of his righteous judgments; be of good cheer, for the enemies cannot ſecure themſelves againſt God's judgments and wrath; the wicked ſhall be inſnared in the work of their own hands. O then! comfort yourſelves in this; for the means which they take to eſtabliſh themſelves, ſhall be the means to deſtroy them. Enemies are propoſing great things to themſelves; yea, and, may be, permitted to accompliſh them in a great meaſure; yea, they may purpoſe to ruin Zion, and may be permittd ſo far to carry it on, that there may be no apparant door of eſcape left; and they may be gathered together, to blot out the name of Iſrael, both root and branch, and yet be ſtopt; yea, God ſhall gather them to the fields, that he may pour out his wrath upon them: They will gather out to the fields, that they may eſtabliſh themſelves on the ruins of his church; but it ſhall be a gathering together for their own deſtruction. Then ſhall it be voiced through the land, *Ariſe, and threſh, O daughter of Zion; for I will make thine horn iron, and I will make thy hoofs braſs, and thou ſhalt beat in pieces many people,* Mic. iv. 13. O! pray for that day, when the enemies ſhall all go out to the fields; for then they ſhall be as ſheaves bound together in bundles for the day of his wrath.

5. The fifth uſe is, another word of conſolation. Is it ſo, that God hath threatned judgment on his enemies? Then long for God's executing his judgments on his enemies; for this is a ſpecial way, whereby he makes himſelf known; for the

the wicked are ſnared in the work of their own hands: Then labour to know the Lord by the acknowledging of his power, for he makes himſelf known by his power to be above enemies, and that even in theſe things, wherein they dealt proudly. By his wiſdom he outwits enemies in their wiſdom: The Lord will make himſelf a known God, by his judgments, ere it be long, in Scotland; and all who will not now know and acknowledge him, ſhall then be made to kmow him by his judgments. O! now, then, it is time to ſtudy to know him, in the way of his mercy, even by his calls of mercy, that ye be not then objects of his juſtice. We may ſee, then, by what is ſaid, that the Lord is uſing the very ſame means and ways, whereby enemies ſtudy to eſtabliſh themſelves, and ſuch as comply with them, by making them friends to themſelves, and thereby endeavouring to get it to go well with them in all things; and yet they are broken among themſelves. How like are they to the builders of Babylon, in theſe their devices in a great meaſure; for they cannot underſtand one another's language, nor work to one another's hands; we ſee ſomething of this already. O! then, this calls us to ſeek to know God, for further manifeſtations of his judgments upon them; and as he thus lets them out, to ſtudy to obſerve and know his hand in them, and as ye would have rich diſpenſations letten out and not loſt to you; for, ye ſhall ſee that all the product of their curſing and ſwearing ſhall be nothing elſe but a mean to bring themſelves down; for, even this the Lord ſhall make uſe of, for making himſelf known Then believe it, and pray for this end. And to him who can counter-work all his enemies, and make all the means which they make uſe of for their eſtabliſhment, become effectual means for their deſtruction, and the church's advancement. To him let us pray.

PREFACE.

MY beloved friends, the being of a God is a thing not eaſily believed; although fooliſh people apprehend little difficulty in the faith of it; yea, if I ſhould go through you all, and aſk at each of you, man and woman, Whether or not do you believe that there is a God? I think I would not get a negative anſwer from any of you; every one of

you would be ready to ſay, I believe that there is a God: But, believe me, although all be ready to ſay it, yet I fear there is but a very few of you, that do really believe it, even the being of a God; for, if it were believed, that there is a God, there would be another kind of impreſſion upon your ſpirits, of his divine majeſty. O! pray for it, and for a right impreſſion of his attributes upon your ſpirits; for if this were, there would be more due fear and reverence payed him by you; yea, if it were believed, that there was a God, there would be certainly another of it amongſt you. Ay, God hath many mouth-confeſſors, but few heart-confeſſors: I ſay, if it were believed that he is a God, infinite in all his attributes, how would poor creatures tremble at his preſence! But I would inform you of five things, that every one of you would think on:

1. I would inform you that there is a God; but it is hard to get a people really to believe this: But, I ſay God hath many witneſſes for himſelf; for all his works bear witneſs for him; and if men and women would not deal violently with their own conſciences, God hath a ſtrong witneſs there for himſelf; yea, ye can look to no place, but there you may have a witneſs for God; heaven, earth, and ſea, and all things therein, do witneſs to the being of a God; yea, in a word, all his words and works do bear witneſs that there is a God, who is infinite in all his works and attributes.

2. I would inform you of this, that he is a very ſore party for the ſinner, that ſtands in oppoſition to him: Ay, he is a very terrible God to theſe, againſt whom he comes with conſuming fire; yea, he is a very ſore party for any created oppoſition. O! who or what can ſtand before that terrible majeſty of heaven and earth! O! who ſhall ſtand, or can ſtand, when he appears! Oh! the appearance of God will make the wicked cry unto the hills and the mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of God and the Lamb, even from the face of an angry God: O! then, bethink yourſelves, while you have time, how ye ſhall ſtand before him, when he ſets himſelf down in the ſeat of judgment, to judge you.

3. I would inform you of this, that as God is a righteous Judge, ſo he is coming to ſet up righteous judgment in Scotland; he is coming to judge himſelf, and will ſet himſelf in the bench, and will have the whole land arraigned before him, in his court of majeſty and juſtice: Ay, ſirs, he is coming to ſtretch out a plumb-line over the land; becauſe once he did erect to himſelf a moſt glorious fabric, both of church and ſtate, in this land, that was ſquared, meaſured out, and lined, by the meaſuring-line of the ſcriptures, and metted out by his hand, with the compaſs of good diſcipline

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and government; and now he is coming with that ſame plumb-line in his hand, and will cut of all that diſagrees with the foundation, even all that does not agree with the plumb-line of the ſanctuary: The word of the Lord will cut off all of the building, that is not conform to that: Ay, Sirs, the Lord is coming to cut off all the excreſcences and ſuperfluities, and all that is not ſquare with the plumb-line of his word; and what is not ſquare, both in church and ſtate, ſhall be hewn down, and thrown by as uſeleſs cumberers of the land. O! but he will make a ſtrange day through Scotland; and with admiration ſhall his working appear, both to friends and enemies. O! when his cup ſhall paſs through, how terrible will he be? He hath been dealing with his people that is called by his name, and made them to taſte the brim of the cup of his anger, but the dregs are reſerved to the wicked; he will pour forth his anger upon them, even on all obſtinate offenders. O! believe it, ſirs, ye may expect terrible days in this land; for he will ſtretch forth the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the houſe of Ahab ſhall be ſtretched out upon it; I ſay, he will ſtretch it out, eſpecially on the great ones, the powers of the land, and their houſes.

4. I would inform you, that, in that day, all that are found in enemies camps, ſhall taſte of the cup of enemies, and be made to drink of the ſame: Remember this, that they that dwell at Babylon, and partake of her ſins, ſhall partake of her plagues: O! it cannot be admired enough, the folly of the great part of this generation, in their fleeing out of God's way, and turning their backs upon him and it, and fleeing into the enemies camps for ſafety. O! do ye think that God will let you and them get ſafety that way? No, no, expect it not; for as he is a God of mercy and love, ſo he is a God of juſtice, and will make manifeſt their folly to the world, by making it appear, that all that they are doing is a making of ſnares to catch themſelves. Think upon this, O! all ye that comply; when the cup paſſes through unto the Amorites, then ſhall you Edomites not paſs unpuniſhed.

5. I would inform you of this, and call you to mind, that the Lord hath brought you here for this end, that ye might be told that judgments are coming, and faſt approaching upon enemies; and therefore ye would take warning, to flee out of the way of his wrath, that ye may be without the flood-mark of his wrath and indignation. O! be intreated to take warning, to flee from the wrath that is to come; for, when it is come, it ſhall ſpeedily overflow, and over run all that is in its way: I ſay, be intreated to take warning, and to flee out of the way of his wrath, that ye may be hid in

the day of the Lord's anger, in the day of his fierce anger: For, let me tell you, the ſword of his anger is ready to be ſent forth on all the inhabitants of the land; yea, he hath ſent me here this day, on the peril and hazard of my life, to tell you this; and ye are come here on the peril and hazard of your lives, to hear it told you: O! therefore take warning, and pray for the ſame.

SERMON XIV.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

WHEN God takes up a controverſy againſt his people, that controverſy will end in the ruin of enemies; when he draws forth his ſword againſt his people, the ſword will not return into its ſheath, until it end its controverſy, by cutting off the enemies: When he puts the cup of affliction into his people's hands, that cup will not be emptied, until enemies get the dregs of it; for the afflictions of his own people are a pledge and declaration of his judgments to be upon enemies; and the reaſons of it are theſe:

1. When the Lord doth afflict his people, notwithſtanding of his love to them, and his intereſt in them, he is thereby declaring his diſpleaſure at ſin in them; and how much more will he puniſh his adverſaries, who run on in a way of ſin, and ſinful oppoſition againſt him? Indeed, he will not let his own people away with their faults unpuniſhed; but ſhall reach them a ſtroke alſo, Jer. xxv. 20. But this controverſy that the Lord begins with them, ſhall not end ſo, until it end in the ruin of adverſaries: for, when the Lord afflicts his people, the city and people that is called by his name, when ſuch things are done in the green tree, how much more will he puniſh enemies? And what ſhall become of them that know not God, neither obey the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt? O ſirs! believe that the controverſy will end with and in the ruin of adverſaries and enemies.

2. Be-

2 Becauſe the Lord's holineſs is engaged in it, and requires it, that their iniquities and abominations ſhall not paſs unpuniſhed, Hab. i. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity: Wherefore lookeſt thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?*

3. Becauſe of his juſtice, Pſalm lviii. 11. *Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth.* Seeing then, that he is a God of juſtice, he will not paſs the wicked, the notorious offences of enemies and rebels. Enemies now have their courts and circuits; but God ſhall hold his circuits, and then he will bring all his enemies before his judgment-ſeat, and will not let them paſs unpuniſhed; for, as our afflictions are pledges of our enemies puniſhments, ſo his controverſy will end in their ruin and overthrow.

4. Becauſe that enemies helped forward the affliction of the Lord's people, therefore he muſt needs make his controverſy with his people end in the ruin of his adverſaries; ſo, by his afflicting his own people, he declares his anger againſt their ſin: So that much more he is offended with them that will not that he ſhould reign over them, Zech. i. 15. *I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen that are at eaſe; for I was a little diſpleaſed, and they helped forward the affliction.* So then, when the Lord ſets himſelf down in the ſeat of judgment, in theſe lands, when he will reckon with adverſaries, for their helping forward the affliction of his people; and he will not forget any of the wrongs done to his church: *For thus ſaith the Lord, He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

Now, having, at ſome former occaſions, ſhewn you the connection of the words, and the diviſion of them, which was divided into theſe five parts, *viz.*

1. That Jeſus Chriſt is the faithful interpreter of the Father's will.

2. That he is ſent of the Father to ſee his will executed upon the heathen.

3. The *time* when *viz. After the glory;* that is, after the Lord had begun to manifeſt his glory, in their begun reſtoration.

4. Then there is the *cauſe,* viz. becauſe they had *ſpoiled* his church.

5. There is the *reaſon* of it, which is taken from his ſympathy and tender affection towards his people. And ſo, having touched a little the firſt three heads, I proceeded to the fourth, from which I laid down theſe doctrines:

DOCT. I. *That Chriſt is the avenger of his people's quarrel, and the recompencer of the wrongs done unto his church.* And this was ſomewhat enlarged on, by ſhewing you ſeveral ſorts of folks, againſt whom he will avenge his church's quarrel

DOCT.

DOCT. II. Was, *That the ways that enemies take to make up themſelves, is made uſe of by the Lord, as a mean to bring them down* This was largely ſpoken to, by ſhewing ſome ways whereby the enemies of the kirk think to eſtabliſh themſelves, which, when they have taken, prove of no effect: And now, I proceed to a third doctrine, which is this:

DOCT. III. *That God's ſpecial quarrel, which he hath at the wicked, is for their ſins, which he will not have unpuniſhed: Yet the greateſt quarrel that he hath againſt them, is becauſe of the wrongs done to his church and people, whatever be the other quarrels that he hath at the wicked: For thus ſaith the Lord after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you,* &c. This point is confirmed from Amos i. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord, For three tranſgreſſions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof; becauſe they carried away captive the whole captivity, to deliver them up to Edom.* Verſe 9. *Thus ſaith the Lord, for three tranſgreſſions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment thereof: becauſe they delivered up the whole captivity of Edom, and remembred not the brotherly covenant.* Now, by theſe ye may ſee that the Lord had many other ſins to charge them with; and though their iniquities were of a competent, yea, of a complete number, ſignified by *three* and *four*, which made *ſeven*; yet this ſin is mentioned as their cope-ſtone ſin, which was the main cauſe of his anger againſt them; and which was the ſin whereupon the Lord's quarrel was mainly founded upon Gaza and Tyrus: It was even for what they had done againſt the church and people of God. Likewiſe this is clear from Zech. i. 19. where there are four horns ſhewn to the prophet, which was a viſion of the enemies of the church, coming in upon her from the four corners of the earth: Then, ver. 20, 21. there are four carpenters repreſented unto the prophet to fray theſe horns, becauſe they had ſcattered abroad Judah, Iſrael, and Jeruſalem; ſo, then the Lord makes that a ſpecial quarrel.

Now, I ſhall give you ſome reaſons for confirming this doctrine: And,

1. The firſt reaſon, is, becauſe theſe ſins ſpeak out moſt of their cruelty and enmity againſt God and his church, for which he will puniſh them.

2. The ſecond reaſon, is, becauſe theſe wrongs done againſt his church, declare moſt of their hatred and malice; for, wherefore perſecuted they his church and people, but becauſe of their hatred and malice at his image in them, which they bear? Pſal. l. 17. *Seeing thou hateſt inſtruction, and caſteſt my words behind thee.* Ver. 20. *Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy brother, and ſlandereſt thine own mother's ſon.* Enemies, indeed, they commit ſin with greedineſs; but, ſure it is, that the wrongs done unto his church, and againſt his people, becauſe

of

of their duty, declare moſt of their hatred to the image of God in them; and that more directly, than for any other thing in them; and therefore God ſhall make this a ſpecial ground of his quarrel againſt them, becauſe of the wrongs done to the church of God.

3. The third reaſon. is, becauſe this is a ſin againſt God, that ſpeaks out moſt of their wickedneſs, Pſal. lix. 3. *For lo, they ly in wait for my ſoul, the mighty are gathered againſt me, not for my tranſgreſſion, nor for my ſin, O Lord.* Ver. 5. *Thou therefore, O Lord God of hoſts, the God of Iſrael, awake to viſit all the heathen, be not merciful to any wicked tranſgreſſor.* If it be inquired, who are thoſe, that thus declare their wickedneſs and tranſgreſſions moſt? It is thoſe that lie in wait for the righteous, and perſecute them, not for their tranſgreſſion, but becauſe they are the church, bear the image of God, and eſpouſe his quarrel; and ſo this declares moſt of their wickedneſs againſt God.

4. The fourth reaſon is, becauſe their perſecuting the people of God, does moſt declare their ignorance of God, and much of a reprobate temper to be in them, Pſalm lxxix. 6, 7. *Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen, that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name: For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waſte his dwelling place.* So, what they do in this declares much of their ignorance of God, and of being given up to a reprobate temper; for they laid waſte his dwelling-place: See for this the whole eighty-third pſalm.

Now, for application of this point, to the preſent time, I would ſpecify ſome things, which the enemy hath robbed this church and land of, for which the Lord will avenge his church's quarrel on them.

1. They have robbed the church of Scotland of her glorious privileges; and therefore God will avenge his quarrel againſt them; and particularly, enemies have robbed us of goſpel ordinances, for which the Lord will take up a ſpecial quarrel againſt them; for we may allude to that word, Lam. ii. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured on the earth, for the deſtruction of the daughter of my people; becauſe the children and the ſucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets of the city.* So indeed, we may ſay, that the children and ſucklings do ſwoon in the ſtreets of our city, for lack of ſpiritual food; and it is enemies cruelty that hath done this: for their cruelty hath been a great mean of depriving us of the preached goſpel, and goſpel ordinances; and for this God ſhall take up a ſpecial quarrel againſt them. Shall he not viſit them for theſe things? and ſhall not his ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?

2. They

2. They have ſpoiled this church and nation of their integrity; for which the Lord will take up a ſpecial quarrel againſt them: I may allude to that word, Cant. v. 7. *The watchmen that went about the city found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me, the keepers of the walls took away my vail from me.* There you ſee, that both churchmen and ſtateſmen robbed the church of her integrity: And ſo we may ſay of theſe in Scotland, that both corrupt ſtateſmen, and corrupt kirkmen, have deprived the church in Scotland of her integrity. This quarrel therefore God will avenge; for they have trampled upon mens conſciences; and their great work is, how to get peoples conſciences inſnared; and ſhall not the Lord viſit for theſe things? Though indeed, well may the ſin of compliance be laid to compliers doors, yet enemies ſhall reckon for it, becauſe they do what they can to rob people of their integrity; for which the Lord will have a ſpecial quarrel againſt them.

3. They have robbed the church and people of their liberties. They have ſpoiled the land of its liberties; for which the Lord will take up a quarrel againſt them. We were once bound in a ſolemn covenant, to maintain the church's privileges, and our own liberties in the land; and for this I allude to Micah ii. 9. *The women of my people have ye caſt out from their pleaſant houſes, from their children have ye taken away my glory for ever.* So, they have ſpoiled and deprived his people in theſe covenanted lands, of all their liberties and privileges, of being Chriſt's true ſubjects, or native ſubjects, in this land; and for this the Lord will not let them paſs unpuniſhed.

4. They have ſpoiled his people of their goods and eſtates; they have robbed and ſpoiled his people of temporal as well as of ſpiritual privileges; they have caſt out women and children out of their pleaſant habitations, Mic. ii. 9. and therefore the Lord will have a ſpecial quarrel againſt them. But, for your encouragement, I ſay, there is not one corn ſheaf that they have ſpoiled you of, for his cauſe, or for his ſake, but he will count it down on enemies ſcore, and make them reckon and pay for it.

5. They have ſpoiled the people of God of their reſt and quietneſs, Heb. xi. 37, 38. *They wandered about in ſheep ſkins and goats ſkins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented: (of whom the world was not worthy,) they wandered in deſerts, and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.* And now, this is the caſe, they have put his people to in this land. They have deprived them of their reſt and quiet; and becauſe of this he hath a ſpecial controverſy againſt enemies, and all them that have cauſed it. And remember this, there is not a foul ſtep, nor a wrong ſtep, that ye have had in all your wanderings,

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for him and his cauſe, but God will note that up, as an *item* in the ſcore of enemies.

6. The enemies have ſpoiled you of your communion and fellowſhip one with another, in meeting together; and therefore he will take up a quarrel againſt them; concerning this, I may allude to Pſal xliii. 4. *When I remember theſe things, I pour out my ſoul in me; for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the houſe of God, with the voice of joy and praiſe, with a multitude that keep holy-day.* And now, they have deprived his people of that; for they cannot get liberty to meet together, for the worſhip of God in public; yea, they cannot get private fellowſhip meetings kept up, but are in hazard of their lives, and are hunted ſundry, one from another; yea, ſuch is their enmity and hatred at our public meetings, that they term them *rendezvouſes of rebellion;* and they declare them to be rebellion; and they give out acts to hunt, purſue, take and kill any who are at the ſame; and becauſe of this the Lord will be avenged on ſuch a people as this. The church of Scotland hath wanted ordinances, after her former manner and purity, theſe ſeveral years, ſince the enemies got the upper hand; but he will make them count, and alſo pay, for every bit of it.

7. They have ſpoiled many of the Lord's people of their lives; and therefore the Lord will have and plead a ſore quarrel againſt the enemies. See for this Pſalm lxxix. 1, 2, 3. *O God, the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled; they have laid Jeruſalem on heaps. The bodies of thy ſervants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven; the fleſh of thy ſaints unto the beaſts of the earth: their blood have they ſhed like water,* &c. And ſo, becauſe of their ſpoiling his people of their lives, he hath a ſore quarrel againſt them: I ſay, there is not one drop of his ſaints blood, ſhed on ſcaffolds, fields, ſeas, or any other places, but God ſhall lay it to their charge, and ſadly quarrel them for it, and make them pay ſickerly for it

8. They have robbed you of your good name; for which he will count with them, Pſal. lxxix. 4. *We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us.* So, enemies have gotten up odious names upon the Lord's people; but the Lord will not forget it: They have gotten up the odious names of *murderers, rebels,* and *traitors,* upon us; but the Lord will mind them for ſuch odious names, as they give us in their papers and pamphlets; for ſhall not the Lord viſit them for theſe things? and ſhall not his ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?

Now, I ſhall cloſe, or ſhut up this doctrine, with ſome words of uſe.

Uſe 1. If it be ſo, that the wrongs and injuries done to his people, are a ſpecial cauſe of God's quarrel againſt his enemies; then, for encouragement, be aſſured, that the enemies of Chriſt's church and kingdom ſhall not paſs unpuniſhed; for they have wronged the church, as much as was in their power; and therefore, in his quarreling with them, he will do to them, as they have done, and purpoſed to do, to his people; for, they purpoſe to blot out the name of Iſrael out of the earth; but they ſhall not get it done; but God will blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven; for God will deſtroy them, and blot out the names, yea, the very remembrance of them, from under heaven, except it be continued with a note of ignominy, as it was of Jeroboam: it was ever after ſaid of him, that Jeroboam who made Iſrael to ſin: So then, the Lord will not forget any thing, that they have ſpoiled his people of, neither their privileges, their lands, nor their integrity, their liberty, their reſt, and quiet, their lives, nor their good names, nor their communion and fellowſhip one with another: In none of theſe he will forget you, but will ſurely repay them.

Uſe 2. Is of inſtruction: If it be ſo then, that the wrongs done to his people, are the cauſe of the Lord's controverſy againſt his enemies; then, know aſſuredly, that the more cruel enemies are, the more will God's controverſy and quarrel be againſt them, and the greater judgments will they meet with. Do ye now ſee the enemies ſtrong, proud, and inſulting viperouſly, and maliciouſly venting themſelves, not only againſt God and man, but alſo againſt poor women and children? Take that as a declaration, that God will have a ſore quarrel againſt them, and that their trouble ſhall be great; for God will puniſh them according to the fruit of their doings; according to that word, Obad. ver. 16 *For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, ſo ſhall all the heathen drink continually; yea, they ſhall drink, and they ſhall ſwallow down, and they ſhall be as though they had not been.* So then, all the cruelty of enemies againſt the church and people of God in Scotland doth declare, that as the ſtorm, which theſe wicked ones will meet with, ſhall be ſore, it ſhall be ſudden. The Lord will as in a moment, or morning, ſuddenly bring deſtruction upon them. O! how ſuddenly will he overthrow them! even as in a moment it ſhall be on them, Mic. vi. 14. *Thy caſting down ſhall be in the midſt of thee:* Their down caſting ſhall be in the midſt of their pomp and pride; they ſhall not eſcape judgments: Yea, and believe it, their ſo long eſcaping is, that he may prepare ſtrokes, even ſore ſtrokes againſt them; ſo that, as they intended to cut off his people, ſo he may cut them off, and make them as the waters of Noah, not to return any more.

Uſe 3.

Uſe 3. Is of reproof: Now, ſeeing that it is ſo, that the Lord will avenge his church and people's quarrel; be reproved from this doctrine, all ye who ſtand in the way of the Lord's avenging his church and people's quarrel; for the Lord hath a quarrel with enemies. Now then, think upon this, all ye who are ſtrengthners of enemies; all you ſupply and locality-payers, all you fine-payers; think upon this, for ye cannot ſay ye are ſpoiled, for ye have ſpoiled yourſelves with your own hands: And think on this, you militia-payers; for ye are ſtanding in the way of God's avenging his quarrel on enemies, becauſe of their ſpoiling of his church and people; and ſo, be intreated to quit theſe practices and evil courſes, as ye would not be found ſtanding in the way of the Lord's avenging his church and people's quarrel: And O! think upon this, all ye capitulators with enemies, and ye builders and upholders of enemies, who ſpoil yourſelves with your own hands to uphold them, as ye would not have a hand in lengthening out of the church's captivity, nor ſtanding in the way of the king's returning to viſit his church and people again.

Uſe 4. Is a word of conſolation and encouragement, to all you who are his people, that are robbed and ſpoiled, becauſe of your loyalty to Jeſus Chriſt, and becauſe of your ſtedfaſtneſs in his cauſe. Be of good cheer, for the Lord will recompenſe all your enemies for the wrongs they have done to you; and as they have ſpoiled you, he will alſo ſpoil them; for he will take your quarrel by the end, and plead it to the full: See for this, Obad. verſe 16. O my friends! I ſay, ſuffer cheerfully, and rejoice when ye are ſpoiled for him and his cauſe; for God himſelf ſhall take your quarrel by the hand. Therefore, O! wait on him, who will puniſh enemies, becauſe they have ſpoiled you. O then! rejoice in him, who is the avenger of his people's quarrel, who will reckon with enemies for all the wrongs they have done to you; comfort yourſelves in him, for he will not let enemies paſs unpuniſhed. O! therefore, ſuffer patiently all that he may call you to; and be not ſpoilers of yourſelves with your own hands; and ſtand not in the way of God's contending with enemies; and ſee that ye be not a mar in the way of his coming, to avenge you on your enemies. O! then, come to him, who is the avenger of his church, and people's quarrel: And to him be praiſe. O! praiſe ye him, all ye his ſaints.

PREFACE.

MY friends, there are four or five things, that I would bring to your remembrance in this country-ſide.

1. I would call you to the remembrance of this, that ye have not been put to ſuch ſufferings, as other places of the country have been put unto, Galloway and Clydeſdale, Annandale and Nitheſdale: Theſe places, I ſay, have been ſubject to more out-caſtings, robbings, and ſpoilings, yea death itſelf, and eſpecially Clydeſdale, than ye have been yet ſubject unto.

2. I would bring this to your remembrance, not to think yourſelves advantagers thereby, but rather loſers: So then, do not think that ye have gained any thing thereby, but rather that ye are great loſers: For,

(1.) Ye have wanted many errands to God, which other places had; for extremities and ſufferings give people many errands to go to God with; and, that ye had not ſuch ſufferings as other places have had, ye have been loſers thereby.

(2.) Ye wanted occaſions of God's manifeſting his love and kindneſs to you, which ſome other places have had; for a day of their extremities and ſtraits, for him and his cauſe, furniſheth him an occaſion of making known his loving-kindneſs unto them, according to that word, Pſal. l. 15. *And call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me.* In effect, I would ſay this, that that hundred fold, that is promiſed to be given to them of the Lord, is then given to all who do ſuffer for him; I ſay, it is never well known, until they be taken off all things in a preſent world, and all the enjoyments therein.

3. I would call to your remembrance, that ye have gotten leave to be more neutral than other places have been, and thereby ye are not gainers but loſers; for, the Lord hath brought great trials and extremities in the way of others, in other places of the country, and hath made uſe of theſe trials and troubles, to make them to ſide themſelves, and declare themſelves, either to be for him, or againſt him. And ſuch as are truly chaſed into him, to declare more for him than formerly, are great advantagers by all theſe calamities: And now, ye have wanted this advantage, and are ſuffered to ly by more neutral, and not made to ſide yourſelves fully with him, as he hath gotten ſome in other places of the country to do. Therefore, I ſay, do not think yourſelves gainers, but rather loſers, by what hath been his way of dealing with you.

4. I would call to your remembrance this, that ye would not think that it ſhall be with you, as it hath been before. I affirm it, That if the Lord have any thing to do with you in this corner of the land, he will ſhake you out of your eaſe; and I add this, I think now the Lord is manifeſting little of his love to that perſon or place, that he is not tryſting with ſuffering this day, even with great ſuffering; and, believe me, I take it as a great token of love to them, on whom he lays the weighty end of the rod and croſs of Chriſt. O! is it not moſt deſirable, to have yourſelves ſquared out, and levelled with Zion's caſe and condition, and made according thereto? It was a noble ſaying in Uriah, *Should I go to my houſe*, ſaid he, *when the ark of God, and my lord Joab is in the fields?* So that good man, when he might have been otherwiſe, he would be no otherwiſe than it was with the ark and people of God.

5. This I would call you to remember, that the Lord is ſeeking you, to make your errand here this night, to ſeek ſomething from himſelf, and to prepare for what you are to meet with; for, I will tell you, ye have the ſwellings of Jordan to go through: And therefore, make it your errand, to get proviſion out of his hand, to ſtrengthen you, that ye ſink not under the ſtream.

Now, pray for the opening of his hand, and for appetites and deſires after him.

SERMON XV.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

MY friends, they do greatly miſtake who think that God will not puniſh his people, becauſe he loves them, and becauſe they are intereſted in him: Nay, I ſay, his intereſt in them, and love to them, are ſo far from hindering him to puniſh them for their faults, that, on the contrary, it becomes the only reaſon and ground of his puniſhing them, Amos iii. 2. *You only have I known, of all the families of the earth,*

earth, therefore will I puniſh you for all your iniquities: For, what is the cauſe of his puniſhing them? Is it not becauſe he hath a love to them? and why hath the Lord puniſhed his church and people ſo ſharply, and ſo ſeverely in this land, but becauſe he hath in a ſpecial manner known them? We cannot only ſay, that of all the families of the earth he hath known us; but alſo in a ſpecial manner, he hath known and loved us, and therefore, paſs unpuniſhed who will, he will not let us paſs unpuniſhed, verſe 3. he ſaith, *Can two talk together except they be agreed?* So, I ſay, the Lord is ſeeking to get his people made ſuch, by their ſtrokes, as he and they can walk together: for, even men cannot walk together, except they be in one way: And alſo they miſtake greatly, who think, when he puniſheth his people, that he hateth them, and ſhutteth up his bowels of mercy, and compaſſion, and ſympathy with them; for, as he loves them in chaſtning; even ſo, he chaſtens them in love; ſo that the more chaſtiſing that they are meeting with, they are the more near his ſympathy: *For thus ſaith the Lord, he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.*

And having at ſome other occaſions ſpoken unto theſe words; we ſhall briefly come to the words, and to what we left at. The words were divided into five particulars:

1. That Jeſus Chriſt is the faithful interpreter of the Father's will.

2. That he is ſent of the Father to ſee his will executed on the nations.

3. The time, *viz. After the glory*, that is, after that he had viſited his people with affliction, or after his glory was manifeſted, in the begun reſtoration of his people; then Chriſt was ſent to puniſh enemies, that they might not hinder nor ſtand in the way of his church's deliverance.

4. There is the cauſe of it, becauſe they had ſpoiled his people.

5. There is the motive whence he is moved, *viz.* his affection and ſympathy. And now, having ſpoken ſomewhat to the firſt four particulars, I come now to the fifth and laſt, that is, the motive that moved him to it, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* There is contained here,

1. The matter in the expreſſion, *viz.* His ſympathy with, his people, which is the reaſon why he puniſheth his enemies, and which makes him prove his ſympathy with his people, and is the cauſe why he contends with the inſtruments of his people's affliction.

2. The manner of the expreſſion is here to be conſidered *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* Now, this is ſpoken after the manner of men; and yet, albeit God be ſaid to have eyes, ears, &c. as men, yet this is not properly

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to be underſtood but figuratively; and ſo, for our better underſtanding of it, and the like, he ſhews that, as man's eye in the tendereſt part of man's body; ſo it holds out his tender affection of, ſympathy with, and love that he hath to his people: And ſo, from the manner of the expreſſion, I lay down this doctrine;

DOCT. I. *That ſuch is God's low condeſcendency, that, becauſe of our weakneſs, he expreſſeth himſelf ſo lowly, that he may be taken up and underſtood according to our capacity.*

And this is clear from the text: as alſo from Hoſ. xii 10. *I have alſo ſpoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied viſions, and uſed ſimilitudes:* And all this was to make his mind more clearly known to poor ignorant men and women. Alſo Zech. iv. 6. *This is the word of the Lord*, that is, the viſion that was preſented to him; and this tells us, that he teacheth his people, not only by the word, but by other means: The ſcriptures are full of ſuch expreſſions, which are ſpoken after the manner of men, becauſe of our weakneſs and ignorance; ſo that he may ſpeak to our capacity: From whence I draw ſome uſes.

Uſe 1. Is of exhortation: Be humbled then, I ſay, under the ſenſe of your ignorance; for, God, becauſe of your ignorance, expreſſeth himſelf thus: And therefore we may ſay with Job, *O! how ſmall a portion of him is known by us?* Therefore now be convinced of your ignorance of God, and of your manifold infirmities; for, what is man, or wherein is he to be accounted of? Oh! man is an ignorant creature, both of God, and of himſelf; for, Jeremiah, who was a great proficient in this ſtudy, ſaith, Jer. xvii. 9. *The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it?* They that think they can perfectly know the deceits of the heart, I ſay they are unacquainted with it; for, as one ſpeaketh well, they that know any thing of themſelves, or of God, do know this, that there is little, or, a ſmall portion of either of them, win to be known here away: I ſay then, be humbled under the ſenſe of your ignorance: O! but conceited people be folk of bad tempers or diſpoſitions: We read of feweſt of the conceited Phariſees coming unto Chriſt, of any other ſort of people: Many publicans and ſinners entered into the kingdom; but few of the conceited Phariſees: So people conceited of their knowledge, are of very bad tempers, and very hopeleſs. This malignant generation, they think themſelves a very wiſe people, and they are either very conceited of their wiſdom, or they call religion folly, and count them that have ventured any thing for it, fools: Be yet, it ſhall be ſeen, that they themſelves ſhall prove fools, and their ways ſhall prove to have been folly, one day: Then it ſhall be ſeen who have been the wiſeſt folk, when we muſt all appear

pear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, or the tribunal of God, to anſwer before him. So then, let them call religion folly, and ſuch as follow it, fools; yet, in that day, God ſhall give a deciſive teſtimony on the godly's behalf: Then teſtimonies ſhall be given for it, when this ſhall be proclaimed, *Come, my people, enter into the joy of your Lord;* and to the wicked, *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know you not.* Now, are theſe wiſe folk, or not, that reject God, and by ſo doing provoke God to reject them? Sure then, their wiſdom at laſt ſhall be ſeen to be folly.

Uſe 2. Of exhortation: Be exhorted, therefore to adore and admire God's condeſcendency, who condeſcends to humble himſelf ſo low, and that after a very plain and clear manner. We ought to adore him who hath condeſcended to reveal himſelf thus to man; ſo that I may ſay, it is his great mercy, that any way he reveals himſelf, but more eſpecially in his bleſſed goſpel, 2 Cor. iv. 3. *But if our goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt.* Indeed he might have kept up his mind from us, and might have had his will from man; and yet none could have challenged him for it: But, O! it is a double mercy he hath beſtowed upon us in his word. Indeed, the papiſts ſay that the word is dark, and therefore the common people ought not to read it. It is true, there are many dark myſteries in the word; but the Lord revealeth them by other ſcriptures, after a very plain way and manner. It is true again, that his word is a very deep treaſure, yea, ſuch a depth that the bottom thereof cannot be found out; but yet, he reveals himſelf ſo plainly and pleaſantly in his word, that theſe things that are neceſſary to ſalvation, are eaſily diſcerned and underſtood: Were people at this exerciſe, of adoring and admiring of God aright, becauſe of his revealing himſelf ſo plainly unto man, there would be more ſeen and found, if there were more reading and meditating on the ſcriptures; I ſay, if there were more making uſe of the ſcriptures, and theſe helps and means, whereby it might be underſtood, and whereby he maketh himſelf known, there would be far more known of him. O! be much in this exerciſe, of reading his word, and uſing thoſe approven helps, to learn and make you know the meaning of the word: But there are many people who think it below them to read, and get the Catechiſms and Confeſſions of faith; but, I ſay, it is not below the greateſt divine or nobleman in the land; for therein is contained a ſum of the Proteſtant Chriſtian religion; and the oftner they are read, the more ſubſtance is found therein O! adore and admire him, and ſearch the ſcriptures; for therein ye will find the words of eternal life. Now, from the matter of the expreſſion, the motive whence Chriſt is moved

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to come againſt his and his church's enemies, or, the reaſon why Chriſt is ſent againſt them, viz. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*; whereby he evidenceth his ſympathy to his people, I lay down this doctrine:

DOCT. II. *That the troubles of the church of God do more and not leſs, indear them to his ſympathy*; for, this is the reaſon, why Chriſt is ſent unto the nations, *For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* It is likewiſe clear from Zech. i. 14, 15. *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, I am jealous for Jeruſalem, and for Zion, with a great jealouſy: And I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen that are at eaſe, for I was but a little diſpleaſed and they helped forward the affliction.* There ye ſee, that the church was in a very low caſe, when her affliction was helped forward by the heathenwho were at eaſe; and this made Chriſt enlarge his ſympathy towards them; I mean, his church; for, his marriage covenant with his people moved his jealouſy in anger againſt the heathen who were at eaſe, whereby he ſhewed his ſympathy with his church and his ſeverity towards his enemies; in love to the one, in very great anger to the other, Rev. iii. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten:* It is a mark of love, to be chaſtened of him, Heb. xii. 6. *For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth:* I ſay then, chaſtiſements and afflictions, are ſo far from arguing the want of ſympathy in him, that they do rather indear his people more and more unto him. Now, to enlarge upon this ſo neceſſary a point, I would tell you.

1. What is required of them, that would be partakers of his ſympathy and would enjoy it.

2. How he proves his ſympathy with his people.

3. Specify ſome advantages which theſe reap, who enjoy his ſympathy. So then, as to the firſt head, what is required of them, that would partake of and enjoy the Lord's ſympathy: I anſwer,

1. It is required of them, that they come to Jeſus Chriſt, Matth xi. 28. *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.* For, theſe that come not to him, are like a tree-leg, tied to a man's body, which feels not, although many ſtrokes and calamities befal the man: I ſay, ſuch cannot expect Chriſt's ſympathy, unleſs they come unto him, and become real members of his myſtical body; and therefore, O! be intreated to come unto him; for, he hath made large offers of himſelf, and is offering himſelf to you this night; and I charge you, as ye would have him to be your ſympathizer, ſlight not this offer: O! come, and embrace a crucified Saviour: And, that I may invite you the more freely, remember the words that he hath ſpoken by the prophet, Iſa. lv. 1, 2, 3. *Ho, every one that thirſteth, come ye*

to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye ſpend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which ſatisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your ſouls delight itſelf in fatneſs. Incline your ear, and come unto me, hear, and your ſoul ſhall live; and I will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David. O my friends! are ye not filled with your own vain ways? Why will ye ſpend your money for that which ſatisfieth not? Come, here is the bread of life in your offer this night. O! have ye not appetites for the ſame? O come! ye have a rich offer, and I will aſſure you, it is a very free offer; for, if ye will, he may be yours; yea, if ye will, their is neither young nor old of you, but ye may have Chriſt; for, he is in all your offers.

2. It is required of them, that they walk before him in the due line of duty, according to that word, 2 Chron. xv. 2. *The Lord is with you, while ye be with him, and if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you.* So, I ſay, the Lord is with you by his ſympathy, while ye are with him by your duty, in ſeeking him. O! will ye follow him in the way of duty; for, if ye forſake him, he will forſake you. See alſo Pſal. xxxvi. 9, *In thy light ſhall we ſee light:* Which ſome interpret well, thus: In the light of thy path we ſhall ſee the light of thy countenance. So, men or women that ſtep aſide from duty, provoke him to deny them his ſympathy. Now then, as ye would have his ſympathy, ſtudy to know your duty, and to follow it; follow it fully and conſtantly: The line of duty muſt be taken up aright, and followed well; it muſt not be a ſtart forward, and a ſtart backward: Indeed, ſome begin well, but do not continue, but turn their back on it the next day, and forſake all: But I exhort you to make it your conſtant work. Zech. x. 12. *And they ſhall walk up and down in his name, ſaith the Lord;* that is, conſtantly, and inceſſantly: Therefore, as you would have Chriſt's ſympathy with you, ſtudy to follow him in the way of duty, and to have him with you; and be not drawn away from duty by the furious rage, or vain flatteries of men; for his ſympathy is enough to counter-balance all theſe.

3. It is required of them, that would be partakers of his ſympathy, that they make uſe of, and imploy him for his ſympathy, Pſalm l. 15. *And call upon me, in the day of trouble; I will anſwer thee.* So, ſuch as ſeek him ſhall find him, and they ſhall find that made out unto them, 2 Chron. xv. 2. *And if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you.* And do not think, that ye that call not on the name of the Lord, ſhall be partakers of his love and ſympathy. Ye who call not on the name of the Lord, ye who neglect the worſhip of God in your families, or alone,

alone, think on this; all prayerleſs folk, think on this, Would ye have God manifeſting his affection and ſympathy towards you, and will ye not ſeek for it? The Lord hath joined the end and the means together: It is thoſe who call upon him, whom he hath promiſed to deliver.

4. It is required of them, that they depend upon him for his ſympathy, Iſa. xxx. 15. *In returning and reſt ſhall ye be ſaved, in quietneſs and in confidence ſhall be your ſtrength.* There cannot be a continual dependence on Chriſt exerciſed, by thoſe that will not enjoy his ſympathy; therefore, in order to the getting of this, ye muſt labour to keep up the life of dependence upon Jeſus Chriſt; for that is an inriching and fruitful life; and know, whatever ye be elſe, if this life be given and gotten kept up, all is ſafe and well; but if not, Chriſt will quit his ſympathy with you: Therefore, hang on him, in whoſe arms is everlaſting ſtrength. Think ye, that any can have the ſun-beams, while the ſun is with held? ſo, neither can ye keep a mercy in Chriſt, or expect his ſympathy, when Chriſt is with held, or not kept in with. I ſay, grace, though it be a fair flower, yet when it is out of Chriſt's hand, it will ſoon wither and decay, ye ſee; what did Peter's grace, when he became confident of it? it withered: So, I ſay, keep up a life of dependence upon him, which is ſo glorifying to God, and fruitful and profitable to his people, and ye ſhall not want his ſympathy.

5. It is required of them, who would partake of this ſympathy, that they would walk in his fear, Pſalm cxlv. 17. *He will fulfil the deſire of them that fear him.* But this is not a ſervile or ſlaviſh fear, that is here meant of; but a holy filial fear: It is not a fearing of him, as he is a ſin-revenging God; but it is a ſon like fear, as a child fears his father; for, of ſuch he ſaith, there is mercy with him that he may be feared. Now, I charge you, to ſeek to win at this fear, and walk in it, and quit your untender practices and converſation, that draw many a cloud betwixt you and his countenance.

6. It is required of them, that there be a nearneſs with God kept up that their ſouls follow hard after him, Pſalm lxxiii. 28. *It is good for me to draw near to God.* O! what is there to be found in his abſence? nothing but deadneſs and darkneſs: Therefore, O! preſs near to himſelf, and ye ſhall be acquainted with that which I ſpeak of; for they that are far from him ſhall periſh, but it is good to draw near to God.

7. It is required of them, that would partake of this ſympathy, that they put a price on his love, Deut. xxxiii. 29. *Happy art thou, O Iſrael who is like unto thee, O people ſaved by the Lord, the ſhield of thy help?* Here Moſes puts a right

eſteem upon the people of Iſrael: Why? becauſe they were a people ſaved by the Lord: And here he puts a high eſteem upon the ſympathy of the Lord: So then, if ye will have him manifeſting himſelf and his ſympathy, ye muſt know what it is to love him; for, to whom he makes known his love, he makes them to know what it is to enjoy him, Pſal. xxxii. 1. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered.* Yea, ſirs, it paſſes the rhetoric of angels to tell what is in his redeeming love. O! eſteem it much, and wonder at it, if ye would partake of it: Let the world ſay what they will, yet we ſay, becauſe his word ſays it, they are happy who enjoy his love and ſympathy, whoſe ſins are covered; and, let the world vilipend as they will, yet be intreated to eſteem highly of it, as ye would be deſirous to enjoy the ſame, here and hereafter.

8. It is required of them, that they have a ſympathy with all his people, in whatever caſe or condition they be in, if ye would have his love to be towards you, or ſhine upon you, Pſalm xli. 1. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.* So then, think on them, and ſympathize with them now, in their low caſe; for they or he that conſidereth the poor, and doth not ſympathize with them, ſhall be delivered; but theſe who deny ſympathy now with his people, God will deny ſympathizing with them in their afflictions and calamities. O! be intreated then, to keep up a ſympathy with his ſuffering people, with his baniſhed, with his wanderers, and with all who are bearing the burden in the heat of the day; and in this firſt trial, as ye would have God's ſympathy with you, when he calls you forth to the trial, ſo ſympathize and keep up your ſympathy with them in their trials: As ye would have him manifeſting his ſympathy to you, manifeſt your ſympathy to his children. O! this is a great article againſt the wicked, Mat. xxv. 42, 43. "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat, I was "thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a ſtranger, and "ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; ſick, "and in priſon, and ye viſited me not." Verſe 45. "In as "much as ye did it not to one of the leaſt of theſe, ye did it "not to me." For, the Lord makes uſe of trials, as touch-ſtones, to ſee who will ſympathize with him in his members, and who will not; and he gets a great article of indictment againſt theſe, who will not ſympathize with him in his members. O! then, do not think light of the ſufferings of the Lord's remnant; otherwiſe, God will look light on you in the day of your affliction.

Theſe are the things that are required of ſuch as would partake of his ſympathy: (1.) They muſt embrace Chriſt. (2.) They

(2.) They muſt not go out of the line of their duty. (3.) They muſt employ him in it, and for it. (4.) They muſt depend upon him. (5) They muſt walk in his fear. (6.) They muſt preſs to be near himſelf. (7.) They muſt put a price on his love. (8.) They muſt keep a ſympathy with his ſufferers. Remember theſe things, and the Lord help, and grant you grace to practice them, to the glory of his great name.

PREFACE.

MY dear friends, to make way for what we are about to do, I would have you to know three or four things. And,

1. You would know that the Lord is greatly diſpleaſed with his people: But I need not mention this; for may not the marks and evidences thereof, which are many and viſible, put us all to confeſs this? and, among the reſt, the ſad diviſions that are among ſufferers, called by his name, ſpeak out this, that he is angry, and in great wrath againſt us. And when he is calling many to ſuffer, yet they cannot be gotten to part with theſe things that are the cauſes of his wrath againſt his church and people; yea, and doth not the decay of love amongſt his people ſpeak out that he is angry? O! the little love and ſympathy that is among his people; and the great envy and jealouſy that is amongſt them, ſpeaks out that he is angry; and do not the ſcaffolds that many are drawn to declare that he is angry? When his people are drawn as lambs to the ſlaughter, the blood ſhed on ſcaffolds, and in the ſtreets of the cities in Scotland, proclaims his wrath and anger to be gone forth againſt his church and people: And do not the ſad night-wanderings, and the out-caſtings of his people, and the hazard they are in and put to, declare his anger and indignation? and our coming here in the peril of our lives declares this. But Oh! why need I mention theſe things that are evidences of his diſpleaſure; for who may not ſee that the Lord is angry with us?

2. I would call you to know and believe this, that all we have met with yet, is but like ſpittings before the ſhower; yea, all that I have named, that you have met with yet, I ſay, it is but like the ſpittings before the ſhower: That which is coming will be like a plump ſhower, that is to fall down upon

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theſe lands; and it will not miſs, for there is a cloud of wrath hanging over theſe lands, and over your heads, and is ready to fall down upon theſe covenanted nations, and it will not miſs; for, if ever the Lord went through a land, in the length and breadth thereof, with his cloke of vengeance, and garments of zeal, he is now about to go through this land in that poſture, and this calls us to be preparing for the ſtorm; and I'll tell you, that it ſhall be ſuch a ſtorm, that death ſhall be more legible than to abide it; yea, ſuch it ſhall be, that they that win through it, ſhall be as if they had travelled thro' many deaths.

3. I call you to know and remember this, that, however it be, it ſhall be well with the righteous. This is a truth that always holds true, it ſhall be well with ſuch as can, or may ſay this. Come he in what poſture he will, he is our God, and we have waited for him; and, for the encouragement of ſuch, I ſay, he will not fail to prepare a Zoar for ſuch, even for a remnant to flee unto, when his fire of vengeance from heaven is coming down upon Sodom and Gomorrah, even upon Britain and Ireland. And as he hath continued a remnant hitherto, ſo he will keep a remnant ſtill, to be a ſeed unto him, to ſerve him, and to pleniſh the earth; I ſay, to repleniſh the land again: But indeed, they will be a very ſmall remnant; we are a very ſmall remnant already, but we ſhall be ſmaller yet; they ſhall be ſtrange and rare perſons, that ſhall endure, and wade through the ſtorm that is coming.

4 I call you to know and believe, that as the ſaddeſt days that ever our church met with are coming, ſo the moſt glorious days that ever our church met with are coming at the back thereof. Know then, that the Lord is uſhering in the greateſt mercies, by the greateſt judgments: For, why will he heat the furnace ſo hot, but that he may bring forth a piece of pure metal? And why will he throw down the fabric of this church to the ground, but that the rubbiſh thereof may be taken away, and the ſuperſtructure thereof made more glorious? Yea, for as affrighting-like as the overflowing judgment is, that is coming on Britain and Ireland, who ſaw what the Lord hath provided for his people at the back of that blaſt or ſhower, they would forget it, they would not get their eyes fixed on it.

Now, let us pray to the Lord, that he would prepare us for judgments and mercies.

SERMON

SERMON XVI.

ZECHARIAH ii. 8.

For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, after the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.

BELOVED, there is nothing that a poor creature can ſtand in need of, but it is to be found in Jeſus Chriſt; and there is not a caſe that any of his people can be in, but there is help for them for it, to be found in him: For, indeed, he is concerned with his people in every caſe and condition they are in, or can be in. And, firs, they wrong Chriſt greatly, who think that he is an idle ſpectator or beholder of his people's caſe; nay, indeed, he cannot abide to be ſo eſteemed; and they that look upon him as an idle onlooker, (ſeeing he is concerned, and really taken up with his people in every caſe and condition) they ſtand greatly in the way of their own mercies, and in the way of his letting out of his ſympathy to them, who ſo look upon him; for he is concerned with his people, and will not deny them neceſſary, ſuitable, and ſeaſonable helps: *For thus ſaith the Lord*, &c.

Now, not reſuming what was laſt ſaid, or what was ſaid at former occaſions from the words; but, that I may come to what I left at, ye may remember, that I had entered upon the fifth and laſt particular, contained in the words, where, having ſpoken to the manner of the expreſſion, *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye*, this doctrine was laid down.

DOCT. *That the troubles of the people of God do more, and not leſs, endear them to his ſympathy.*

And, in the proſecution of this doctrine, I told you that I purpoſed to ſpeak to theſe three particulars:

1. What was required of them that would be partakers of the Lord's ſympathy.

2. How doth the Lord prove his ſympathy with his people.

3. What advantages they reap who enjoy his ſympathy. So, having ſpoken to the firſt of theſe, I come now to the ſecond, *viz.* How the Lord proves his ſympathy with his people: And now, I ſhall name ſo many ways that he doth it.

1. He proves his ſympathy with his people, by ſhewing them mercy, Pſal. cl. 1. *His mercy endureth for ever.* There in that pſalm, it is twenty-ſix times repeated, that *his mercy endureth for ever.* O! it is his mercy that makes him confer

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theſe benefits to his people; ſo, his mercy is ſhewed by his manner and way of it, or of letting out of it, and by this he ſpeaketh, or letteth out much of his ſympathy unto them, and of his affection to them. This is a large fountain, from which flow all their other benefits; for what can or will his mercy not be forth-coming for unto his people?

2. He proves his ſympathy with his people, by his moderating their chaſtiſements and afflictions that he brings on them; yea, all our afflictions and chaſtiſements ſpeak forth his ſympathy with us, Hoſ. xi. 8, 9. *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim? How ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man, the holy One in the midſt of thee*, &c. All the chaſtiſements that the Lord's people meet with, are all parts of his ſympathy; becauſe, in any of theſe. he never exerciſeth the fierceneſs of his anger upon them; though fleſh and blood be ready to ſay their afflictions are ſharp, yet, if we conſider it rightly, his ſympathy is ay great, ſo long as we are not conſumed, ſo long as we are out of the pit, or not plunged into eternal wrath; for his love is a token of his ſympathy. O! then, think not that his bowels of mercy are ſhut up, otherwiſe we had been ſwallowed up in the flood of his wrath; ſo, all we can be tryſted with, on this ſide of time, are a proof of his ſympathy, how ſharp ſo ever they be to us: And again,

3. He proves his ſympathy with them, in condoling their caſe, ſo to ſay, Heb. iv. 15. *For we have not an high prieſt, which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted, as we are, yet without ſin.* Iſa. liii. 3. *He is a man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief.* So, all the affliction of his people is, as it were, the piercing of Chriſt's ſide; and every ſtripe they get brings, as it were, a tear from his eye. May not this make us wander with cheerfulneſs even through all our afflictions, that you have ſuch a fellow-feeler and ſympathizer as Chriſt is?

4. He proves his ſympathy with his people, by letting them have his aſſiſting preſence with them, Pſalm xlvi. 5. *God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not be moved.* Whatever piece of trouble the Lord calls his people to, or whatever afflictions they are to walk through, yet he is always near them, and preſent with them, Joſh. i. 5. *I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee.* And may not ſome of us ſay, we have ſeen the Lord manifeſting his preſence, by his ſympathy to his people, when he brought them to the ſtake, and led them to the ſcaffolds? O! there he proved his ſympathy with them, by helping them to look the king of terrors out of countenance; and when he led them to the ſwelling of Jordan, there he left them not, but his gracious preſence was aſſiſting to them, that they ſink not under the ſtream: O! ſeek manifeſtations of his preſence under

under your trials and chaſtiſements; and then you may proclaim a defiance to all that enemies can do: God is our refuge therefore we need not be afraid, though the mountains were caſt into the ſea, Pſal. xlvi. 12.

5. He proves his ſympathy with his people, by his comfortable preſence, Pſalm xlvi. 4. *There is a river, the ſtreams whereof ſhall make glad the city of God;* there is river of conſolation, whereof he never fails to let out to his own, in the time of their affliction, Iſa. xliii. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee and through the rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee; when thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee:* In the midſt of all theſe, his comforting preſence will make us ſing for joy, ſongs of praiſe, and will make them ſay, Where can the wormwood and gall of afflictions be?

6. He proveth his ſympathy with his people, which is known by his delivering his people out of their great difficulties and ſtraits, Pſal. xci. 14. *Becauſe he hath ſet his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him;* and this he doth, when he ſets them at liberty from their calamities: O! how many ways did he prove this his ſympathy with Iſrael, when they were under the feet of their oppreſſors? and did he not this to us, when he delivered us from the yoke of popery and prelacy, and eraſtian ſupremacy; albeit our ſins have provoked him to caſt us under ſuch yokes again? But his inward great affection and ſympathy will not let him alone, until he deliver us again.

7. He doth ſhew himſelf in his ſympathy towards his people by his anger againſt the inſtruments of their affliction, Exod iii. 9. *Now therefore, behold the cry of the children of Iſrael is come unto me, And I have alſo ſeen the oppreſſion, wherewith the Egyptians oppreſſed them:* Well, what comes of it? Exod xiv. 7. *Behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they ſhall follow them, aad I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his hoſt, upon his chariots, and upon his horſemen:* See this, the Lord's ſympathy with the Iſraelites in his executing of juſtice upon the Egyptians; and thus he proves his affection and ſympathy to his people, by taking vengeance on the inſtruments of their calamity. Think you not, but the love that Chriſt carries, by vitue of his marriage-covenant to theſe lands, will make him lay on heavy ſtrokes on perſecutors, on theſe tyrants, and their accomplices, I ſay, his love to his own will make him tread them down in his indignation; then, fear not, ſeeing the Lord proves his ſympathy with his people, by his ſtrokes upon the inſtruments of his own peoples afflictions. And again,

8. He proves his ſympathy with his people, by making all that they meet with work together for good, Rom. viii. 28.

Nothing ſhall they meet with, but it ſhall be good, and turn to good in the end; for, he is God; and ſo, as he is God, he is good, and will with-hold no good thing from his own, therefore he doth no evil; yea, he will do nothing but what he will make work together for their good: All their toſſings and toilings, and all their extremity and hardſhips, and difficulties that his people meet with, ſhall be for their good: Now then, queſtion not the proofs of Chriſt's ſympathy with you; for he is faithful, who hath ſaid and promiſed it; he will perform it, and will not lie, though in the mean time it is hard for carnal miſbelieving hearts or eyes, to ſee or conſider how many difficulties and croſs-like diſpenſations he can make work together for his people's good; but I would have you believing this, for faithful is he that hath promiſed it, and will alſo do it: Now I come to the application.

Uſe 1. Is of exhortation: Now, be exhorted then, to make uſe of Chriſt for his ſympathy, Heb. iv. 14, 15. ſeeing Chriſt is ſuch a ſympathizer, and proves it ſo many ways, O! then, come to him, and ſeek it of him, for he delights to prove his ſympathy to his people: Would you have his ſympathy, and will you not ſeek it from him? I ſay, ſeek it, and give him no reſt until he prove his ſympathy by his aſſiſting preſence; and, in the reſt of the ways I have ſpoken of to you. O you! that make mention of the name of the Lord, give him no reſt until he eſtabliſh Jeruſalem as the praiſe of the whole earth: O! then for the affection he bears to his own people, be intreated to employ him night and day, to prove his ſympathy to his people.

Uſe 2. Is of information: O! wonder at his condeſcendency, in that he doth ſo far condeſcend, as to prove his ſympathy with his people: This is matter of wonder and admiration, that he ſhould humble himſelf ſo low, as to behold what is among his people; I ſay this is matter of wonder, that he ſhould condeſcend ſo low, who is the glory of heaven, as to be concerned with the worms of the earth: As if a beggar was ſitting on a dunghill, and a great king was paſſing by, in a throne of majeſty, ſhould leave his throne, and ſit down with him, that he might ſympathize with him in that low caſe: This did Chriſt, he left his Father's glory, and came down to dwell with men, that he might the better ſhow his ſympathy with men.

Uſe 3. Is of encouragement: Be ſtrengthned and encouraged to go on, in following ſuch a loving maſter, through all trials and afflictions; fear not to venture upon him through all the ſwellings of your Jordan, through all the ſwelling depths of difficulties; fear not to face ſtorms, be encouraged to caſt yourſelves over upon him, and he ſhall ſtrengthen your hearts. O! then, put away your fears, doubts, and miſbelief, and go

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on valiantly, as valiant ſoldiers of ſuch a noble captain; for, he will carry on his work, and ſufficiently furniſh and carry through his people, and will give a noble reward unto you: The victory is ſure and certain with him; therefore wait on him, and bide with him, I come now to the third thing I purpoſed to ſpeak unto, *viz.* The advantages which they reap who enjoy his ſympathy; and,

1. The firſt advantage is this, they reap and enjoy a compleat ſympathy, that is, he is compleately able to ſympathize with us all; *For it hath pleaſed the Father, that in him ſhould all fulneſs dwell:* There is no ſtrait that can reduce him to a non-plus. O ſirs! in him dwells all fulneſs, he is a fountain of love, and flows ſtill towards his people, and never fails.

2. The ſecond advantage is this, they enjoy a glorious ſympathy, I mean ſuch a ſympathy, as is glorifying to God, and in end brings them to glory; for when Chriſt manifeſted his ſympathy to his people, in a ſpecial manner by his coming to take their nature, what was the ſong that was ſung in heaven by the angels? Luke ii 14. *Glory to God in the higheſt, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.* This is a ſympathy, that doth not derogate from his glory, but it rather adds to the ſame. Hence learn, all you that have a deſire after the glory of his name, rejoice in how much he is manifeſting his ſympathy towards his people; for thereby his glory is more declared.

3. The third advantage (which, with all the reſt, may rather be called properties of his ſympathy) it is a coſtly ſympathy, Heb. v. 8. though he were a ſon, yet learned he obedience by the things which he ſuffered; he ſuffered many things, that he might know how to ſympathize with his people: It is an eaſy come-at ſympathy to you, but it was not ſo to him; it was dear bought to him, for he came and lay three quarters of a year in a virgin's womb, he ſuffered reproach, and death itſelf, that he might manifeſt his love and ſympathy towards you; ſo it is a coſtly one to him, though not ſo to us: O! then, think not little of it, that coſt him ſo dear. He put himſelf in every condition his people can be in (ſin only excepted, that he might the better ſympathize with his own people: He had not a hole to hide in, he endured all the onſets of his Father's wrath, that he might learn, and be able to ſympathize with poor thunder-beaten ſouls.

4. The fourth advantage they enjoy of him, who are his, and made faithful is, his faithfulneſs, Joſh. i. 5. *I will be with thee, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee;* he will not leave them in the day of their ſtraits. He is not ſuch an one, as can do, but will not do it; but he is ſuch an one, as both can and will; neither is he ſuch as would fain do it, but cannot do it; for he is both willing and able: O! then, that is

a friend worth the having. There are many worldly friends, that would fain do good, if it were in the power of their hands; but Chriſt is not ſuch a one; but, as he willeth, ſo he is able to do, and will do: There are many falſe friends, who love their friend in proſperity, but give him a ſlip in a day of ſtraits; who are compared by Solomon to a foot out of joint; but Chriſt is a friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother; yea, he is a brother born for adverſity.

5. The fifth advantage that they reap, is a communicative ſympathy, which each of his people reap and enjoy; yea, and each one of his people, in more or leſs, reap and enjoy it, without wronging one another, or without diſadvantage one to another; for Chriſt can and doth ſympathize with his own, in the outmoſt corners of the world, and alſo with us here; even as all enjoy the ſun beams, godly and wicked, as they were but one without wronging one another; even ſo do all his people enjoy him, without wronging others. O what a communicative goodneſs is Chriſt's goodneſs to believers! It is ſuch, that all his people enjoy him, as but one enjoyed him. Ay, ſirs, there is no envying, or rather, no wronging of one another, as to the enjoyment of Chriſt; ſo large is his ſympathy, as if he were ſuch, that his ſympathy with one makes him not forget another, as readily and ordinarily it is among men; for it is ordinary with men, that if they ſympathize with one, they forget another; but it is not ſo with Chriſt, for he will not forget the moſt inſignificant thing or perſon of all his people; he remembers all our afflictions, and alſo commiſerates our caſe, in all our ſtraits.

6. The ſixth advantage is this, they enjoy a free ſympathy, Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him:* I ſay, none can come to enjoy his ſympathy, but they ſoon or late get their errand: He puts none away that come unto him, and he makes a free offer to all that will come unto him, and partake of, or receive and embrace the offer. So then, ſeeing it is a free ſympathy, any of you that need it (and who needs it not?) exclude not yourſelves from it.

Now, for the uſe of this doctrine, you may here learn, 1. The happy eſtate of thoſe who have his ſympathy: Of ſuch it may be ſaid, that their eſtate cannot be made miſerable; thoſe who have him a ſympathizer with them, are in a happy condition: Ay, they may go with the ſmalleſt party, and defy all their enemies; they may fling out a flag of defiance againſt hell and death; they may ſing, *God is our refuge and our ſtrength, a preſent help in time of trouble; we will not be afraid, though the mountains be caſt into the ſea*, &c. O! then, thoſe who have him, their caſe is happy; yea, even ſo happy that it cannot be declared; yea, ſo happy that all created powers cannot

cannot make them miſerable. O! then, learn from that, the happy caſe of his people.

Uſe 2 Be moved hence to come unto Jeſus Chriſt, that you may enjoy that ſympathy; for this is chiefly requred of all, that they would come; do not think that he will ſympathize with any that are not his true members, for it is as if you ſhould tie a tree-leg to a man; let him wear it never ſo long he will not find life in it: Know, then, that as Chriſt hath true members ſo he hath true ſympathy with them: Be intreated therefore to come and receive Chriſt, who is a communicative and true ſaviour. Would you have him manifeſt his true ſympathy to you theſe ſo many ways foreſaid? Then come and embrace and receive him: for, without this, you cannot expect his ſympathy; ſo then, I lay it home upon you, that, as you deſire to reap the benefits which they who enjoy him do reap, be intreated to lay hold on him: O! ſlight not this offer; for you know not when you get ſuch an offer: I ſay, as you love your immortal ſouls, come away; as you tender his glory, ſlight not this offer: The Lord has brought this offer in your way, and we are come over many difficulties, tendering his glory. As you tender God's glory, ſlight not the offer. I ſay, the Lord hath brought us here, over many difficulties, to make theſe offers unto you; and will you let this offer go away with a ſlight? If you do it, ſad ſhall your caſe be, and ſad ſhall be your accuſation; it ſhall witneſs in heaven againſt you, that Chriſt was in your offer, and you refuſed him; ay, it ſhall gnaw the conſciences of you, in that unquenchable fire of hell: Be intreated therefore to embrace him. And now to ſuch as embrace him, I declare peace; but to ſuch as will not embrace him, I denounce everlaſting war. O! all ye his ſaints, praiſe ye him.

PREFACE.

THERE are many, I fear of the few that are come here greatly unprepared for this piece of work. There are few of you, I fear, that have been at any pains to get preparation for ſuch a work: And if ye have been ſeeking preparation, I will bring ſomething to your remembrance, which ye ſhould have been putting to yourſelves, before ye came hither: I ſay, there are ſome pieces of exerciſe, which ye

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ſhould have been about, before ye came to this piece of work: And,

1. If ye have been deſiring to be prepared for this work, then ye have been upon a ſearch, to know what may be the cauſe of diſtance between God and you. O! beloved, have ye been at this night ere ye came here? Have ye looked back and fore, to ſee what cauſes of diſtance are yet between God and you! O have ye been praying unto him, that theſe might be removed? I fear the ſenſe of theſe are very little upon the moſt part of your hearts: And if ye would ſpare a time, to know who is the man and woman, that is at greateſt diſtance from God; I would anſwer you this, That man and woman, that is leaſt ſenſible of their diſtance, leaſt ſenſible of ſin, that cauſes diſtance, and is as a cloud betwixt the light of God's countenance and their poor ſouls, which is as a multitude of mountains of diviſions, dividing between God and ſinners. Have ye ſearched the cauſes of diſtance, and wreſtled that theſe might be removed, for his name's ſake? Such as have done this have been ſeeking to be prepared for this work.

2. Have ye been examining, what it was that brought you here? What moved you to come here? And what had you before your eyes in coming here? Have ye examined this? O! fear, the moſt part of us have never ſaid to our ſouls, O ſoul! what art thou ſeeking here this night? O ſoul! what wouldſt thou have this night? O ſoul! knoweſt thou what thou art going about this night? Hath this been your communing and language with your hearts? O! hath it been ſo? and what cauſes have ye found out to be in you? I fear many come here to get their curioſity ſatisfied, and that is the thing they are ſeeking: And poſſibly ſome come to catch advantage and go away with an ill report, and that is the thing they are ſeeking; but if ye be not ſeeking Chriſt, and his directing and aſſiſting grace, his pardoning and preventing grace, all your ſeeking is but fooliſh and deſtroying: O! but people have great need to examine their ends and motives, in all the duties they go about

3. Have ye been ſearching into your ſouls, and examining yourſelves, and ſearching to know what corruption is ſtrongeſt and what grace is weakeſt, and winning to get the one ſtrengthned, and the other weakned? If ye have been ſeeking preparation, ye have been at this piece of exerciſe: But I fear, the moſt part here cannot lay their hand upon their ſore; ye cannot touch it with your finger, ye cannot ſay, I would have this corruption brought down, and this grace ſtrengthned: O! but I would have you believe it, if ye would have any medicines applied by Chriſt's hand, ye muſt lay your hand upon the ſore: We read in the goſpel, that there

there come unto Chriſt ſome blind men, crying, *Have mercy upon us, thou Son of David;* But they got not what they were aſking, until they become more particular, ſaying, *Lord, let us receive our ſight;* then they received their deſire: Ye muſt lay your hand on the ſore, and touch the particular one; for, it is not all needy folk, but ſenſible folk, whom Chriſt helps, ſuch as are ſenſible of their need; and they cannot be ſenſible, if they be not particular.

4. If ye have been preparing for this work, then ye have been counting the coſt of it, to know what it may coſt you: It will coſt you an anſwer before the tribunal of God; ye muſt anſwer there for all the deeds done in the body; and this alſo will be a queſtion, O man, and woman! What waſt thou ſeeking on ſuch a night, in ſuch a place? Remember this, firs, and ſee what anſwer ye will give to the Almighty; and gird up your loins, for this queſtion will as certainly be proponed to you, as I am ſpeaking unto you, What was your errand and what benefit reaped ye by ſuch opportunities? There are no works of this kind, which are not either great mercies, or great plagues to the people they are ſent to; they either help forward or backward.

5. If ye have been ſeeking to be prepared for this duty, ye have been counting what pieces of incident coſt this piece of duty may coſt you: Have ye counted that this night's herecoming may coſt you your heads or necks? Ye may be called by men to anſwer for it; ye may be called by men to deny it, or to die for it: Ye muſt count the coſt of all duties ye go about; this is needful; there muſt be a ſubſcribing to be at any coſt whatſoever, in going about any piece of duty.

6. If ye have been preparing yourſelves rightly, then ye have been aſking at your own hearts, O ſoul! what haſt thou done with former opportunities, and how haſt thou improven theſe? Every new opportunity hath a new call to look back to former occaſions, to ſee how they have been improven: Have ye been aſking at yourſelves, what good ye have gotten of the goſpel in former opportunities? This, I ſay, ſhould bring you in mind of former occaſions; and ye ſhould examine what good ye have gotten by them.

7. If ye have been preparing yourſelves, then ye ſhould have been putting this queſtion to yourſelves alſo, O ſoul! what good haſt thou gotten of the rod? God hath ſent his rod, to make his word work; and, O! how hath it made it work? I would have you to lay this home upon yourſelves, how the rod of God made the word of God work; for that it is the Lord's purpoſe in his rod, is evident, he ſends it on a people, that he may make his word work effectually: God would have the word to do us good; and for this effect he is laying the rod heavy upon us, that he may cauſe the one

to

to be a mean to make the other do us good: If ye have gotten good of the rod, then it hath made the word to work effectually upon you; if ye have been rightly preparing yourſelves, this hath been a part of your exerciſe.

8. And laſtly, If ye have been rightly preparing yourſelves for this piece of work, then ye have been wreſtling with God, that he might be here, and tryſt with us this night; ye have been praying, that he might remove the cauſes of diſtance, and might draw near to us, and draw our hearts near himſelf. Dare I think that any of you hath not been about this exerciſe before ye came hither? I am ready to think, in the judgment of charity, that all of you have been thus exerciſed; and if there be any who have ſlighted and neglected it, that their hearts will ſmite them: But as for ſuch as have been diligently taken up about it, ſuch may expect his preſence and to ſee his hand liberally opened.

SERMON XVII.

JEREMIAH XXX. 7.

Alas! for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he ſhall be ſaved out of it.

THIS generations plague is hardneſs of heart: I think there was never a generation and people, that were given up of God to more judicial hardneſs of heart, than this people is: I think there were never a people that had ſo little feeling as this people have, who are given over to ſuch hardneſs of heart, and ſtupidity of mind; and I will give you two demonſtrating evidences of the ſame: The firſt is from the enemies: The ſecond from ourſelves.

As to the firſt, which is taken from the enemies, I think we never heard of a generation of perſecutors, whoſe ſpirits were more ſet on edge by hell's fire than theſe; they perſecute without compaſſion, they perſecute without pity; ſo that they have given up, not only with all things like Chriſtianity, but with very human reaſon itſelf: What example ſhall I bring to delineate them? I confeſs it puts me to it; Pharaoh will

will not do it; he oppreſſed the Iſraelites in their bodies and eſtates; but we read not of his oppreſſing them in their conſciences, and of blood-ſhed, whatever he intended, at the end, when they were gone out of this land, I ſay, we read not much of his oppreſſion of conſcience, and of his blood-ſhed: But there is a generation will be ſatisfied with nothing, but the conſcience; and that will not ſatisfy unleſs the head go alſo. Neither need I mention Ahab, he was indeed a wicked man, and perſecutor; but whatever objective ties were lying upon him, yet there were not ſuch objective ties as on this generation: it was as little his duty, as their duty; yet he was not ſo oft ſworn as they: He was a wicked man; but if he had been as wicked as the men of this generation, he would not have had an Obadiah about him. Neither need I mention Hazael: I think, if I could join them altogether, it would not compleatly do it: I may ſay, O poor Scotland! the Lord hath ſent the worſt of the heathen to perſecute thee; for, they declare by their actings, that they defy God; they declare their defiance againſt the Moſt High, and caſt out a flag againſt the heavens: In effect, I can read nothing to be the due ſenſe and meaning of their actings and proceedings, but this their defiance of God. But,

A ſecond demonſtrating evidence is amongſt ourſelves; for, there was never a poor people chaſtned, and ſo little ſenſible of it; our ſtroke is heavier than our groaning: The Lord hath taken a rod, and hath dipt it in the ſcum of hell, and whipped us with it; and yet we are not ſenſible! He hath choſen men, worſe than the heathen, to be our chaſtiſements; and all to let us ſee thee filthineſs of ſin, and the greatneſs of our defections: Yet where is the man, and where is the woman amongſt you, that is rightly ſenſible of God's anger? Who is brought by all this, to hear the declarations of his wrath, which our ſad caſe is publiſhing to us? Ah! ah! there are few laying it to heart, that this is the time of Jacob's trouble, and that it is a great day, and that none is like it: Few are crying, alas! alas! alas! for the greatneſs of this day!

At the former occaſion, I ſhewed the connection of the words, divided them, and laid down a doctrine, and an uſe from it. But, to make way for what is now to be ſaid, I ſhall deduce the ſame in a ſhort word.

1. As to the connection, the Lord is in this chapter ſhewing unto Jeremiah the bringing back of the Jews captivity, and gives a command to write it, that it might be the better believed, and contribute to the Jews their ſtrengthning in ſuch a caſe, when ſome were ſaying, how could theſe things be? as it is in verſe 6. *Wherefore do I ſee every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into*

 paleneſs?

paleneſs? and therefore command is given to write it: *For thus ſaith the Lord, though it be a great day, yet he ſhall be ſaved out of it:* And the manner of it is declared in the following words, ver. 8, 9. *I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burſt thy bands, and ſtrangers ſhall no more ſerve themſelves of him: But they ſhall ſerve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raiſe up unto them.* Shewing that this gathering of them from their captivity, typified Chriſt's collecting his diſperſed elect throughout the world.

I divided the words into two heads: The firſt contained the meaſure of the affliction of the church, which is very great, ſo that they met not with the like of it formerly, and it was matter of concernedneſs to the church's children, *Alas! for that day is great,* &c.

The ſecond head contained a ground for their deliverance, *But he ſhall be delivered out of it.*

From the firſt head, I obſerved this point, *That when moderate afflictions do not the Lord's people good, then he comes with ſeverer judgments againſt them.* I enlarged a little upon this, with the anſwering of two queſtions: The firſt was, How did the judgments of God appear among us, to be greater and ſorer! The ſecond queſtion was, How ſhall it appear, that we have gotten good of the Lord's rods and afflictions? Now, I proceed to a ſecond doctrine, which is this,

DOCT. I. *The afflictions of the people of God, are cauſe of great ſorrow and concernedenſs to all God's children,* Jer. ix. 1. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the ſlain of the daughters of my people.* The ſlain of the daughters of his people lies ſo near his heart, that he would deſire to weep day and night, without intermiſſion. I trow, the moſt part of you know not what it is to mourn one hour for the ſlain of the Lord's people. Likewiſe, Jer. iv. 19. *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at my very heart; my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my peace, becauſe thou haſt heard, O my ſoul, the ſound of the trumpet, and the alarm of war.* O! what concernedneſs is there, concernedneſs at the heart? I am pained at the heart, becauſe deſtruction upon deſtruction is cried, becauſe I heard the found of the trumpet, the enemies coming againſt the church of God. And how is he greatly afflicted with what befals the church of God! Lam. ii. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the deſtruction of the daughter of my people, becauſe the children and the ſucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets of the city.* O! the church's calamity is matter of great concernedneſs to all the church's children; it is matter of great concernedneſs, indeed. Do ye not think that he would be a very

very ungrate and unatural ſon, who ſaw his mother toſſed, troubled, deſtroyed, and left wounded and bleeding? I ſay, think ye, were he not very ſtubborn, who ſaw this, and were not concerned with it? and yet, Zion's children, how unconcerned are they now with their mother's bleeding and diſtreſſed caſe? I will preſs this duty home upon you, with ſeveral reaſons.

Ye may ſay unto me, what can the reaſons be, why Zion's children ought to be ſo much concerned with Zion's afflictions?

Anſw. I ſhall tell you ſome weighty reaſons, why it ought to be ſo.

1. Becauſe the afflictions of the children of God are evidences of his anger againſt his church, Pſal. lxxix. 3. *Their blood have they ſhed like water round about Jeruſalem, and there was none to bury them.* Verſe 4. *We are become a reproach to our neighbours, a ſcorn and deriſion to them that are round about us.* Verſe 5. *How long, Lord wilt thou be angry for ever? Shall thy jealouſy burn like fire?* What was it that the Pſalmiſt ſaw in their blood being ſhed? He ſaw God's anger: All our blood-ſhed is a declaration of God's anger; all our toſſings, baniſhments, outcaſtings, *&c.* are a declaration of God's anger; yea, our coming here under cloud of night, wth the hazard of our lives, ſays that God is angry; and ſhould not the affliction of the church lie near our hearts, becauſe it cries, God is angry? Where is there a ſon that hath love to his father, but he will be concerned with his father's anger? And where is there a ſervant that loves his maſter, but he will be troubled when his maſter is angry? But, in effect, I muſt ſay this, The moſt part looks like children that care not for their parents, and like a ſervant that cares not for his maſter; ye profeſs fair indeed; but who of you is heartily grieved for the affronts and indignities done againſt the Lord?

2. Becauſe then God's declarative glory ſuffers: The church is ſaid to be God's glory, Iſaiah iv. 5. *For upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.* He will be for a wall of fire about his church; ſhe may be ſaid to be his glory, becauſe he delights to glorify himſelf for her, and by her; he declares his preſence in her, and for her: His glory and name ſuffers by the afflictions of his church; and ſhould not this lie near our hearts; that his glory is ſo concerned in the afflictions of his church? It were a ſmall matter, if only a company of men and women ſuffered; but, mainly and principally, his glory ſuffers; and that becauſe then his preſence is obſtructed: His preſence makes the church glorious; but then, in the time of her great affliction, he is not ſeen appearing for his church; his

mercy and juſtice are not then conſpiciouſly manifeſted to the world.

3. Becauſe then his atributes are hidden and darkned; his faithfulneſs and power is called in queſtion: This was a thing that did lie near David's heart; for it was as a ſword in his bones, while the enemies ſaid unto him, *Where is thy God?* Pſalm xlii. 10. The affliction that was upon the poor church, made the enemies to ſay, Now where is their God? he hath forſaken them: God's being and attributes are called into queſtion, by proud boaſters and blaſphemers, in ſuch times as theſe; and ſhould not this lie near our hearts? The enemies are ſaying unto us, as they ſaid to David, Pſal. xxii. 8. *He truſted on the Lord that he would deliver him: Let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him.* Let him deliver him now: If he come not, his preſence is obſcured, and his attributes called in queſtion; and ſhould not this move us with concern for his church's afflictions?

4. Becauſe it is a day of abounding ſin: Hence ſays the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. lxxiv. 18. *Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the fooliſh people have blaſphemed thy name.* That is a day of reproach and blaſphemy againſt God; a day of abounding ſin, and that two ways.

(1.) Sin abounds becauſe of the perſecution; they add ſin unto iniquity, they multiply iniquity, they run like incarnate devils in their corrupt courſes.

(2.) Sin abounds, becauſe many deny God's name, and faint in ſuch a time: We never read of the church's afflictions in any time, but there were always many that drew back, and few ſtood, in compariſon of them that did fall; ſo, ſuch a day is a day of abounding ſin, Pſal. xii. 8. *The wicked walk on every ſide when vileſt of men are exalted.* It is then that wickedneſs keeps the crown of the cauſeway, and is moſt in requeſt. We ſee now, that wickedneſs is become the paſs, by which men may ſafely travel: One who can curſe, drink, and ſwear, is ſafe; ſuch are called by them no rebels to their king; albeit he and they be both rebels to God.

5. Becauſe enemies in ſuch a day became inſolent and proud; therefore the children of God ought to be concerned with the church's afflictions: *Remember this*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *that the enemy hath reproached, O Lord, and that the fooliſh people have blaſphemed thy name*, Pſal. lxxiv. 18. It is a day wherein the enemies become proud, when they ſay, *Let God deliver him, ſeeing he truſted in him.* They proclaimed their defiance againſt God; they declare that they defy him, and eſteem him not; and ſhould not this make the church's affliction lie near our hearts; ſeeing then the enemy becomes greater boaſters and mockers?

6. Becauſe

6. Becauſe the affliction of the church puts many to a ſad quandary and non plus; therefore we ought to be much concerned with Jacob's affliction; many are like to be ſtumbled in ſuch days, as even David himſelf was like to be ſtumbled, when he ſaw the proſperity of the wicked; ſeeing they were not troubled, nor plagued like other men: Therefore he ſaith, Pſalm lxxiii. 13. *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vain, and waſhed my hands in innocency.* What a ſad non-plus puts it thoſe unto, who are ſpoken of, Malichi ii 17. *Ye have wearied the Lord with your words: yet ye ſay, Wherein have we wearied him? when ye ſay, Every one that doth evil, is good in the ſight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them, and where is the God of judgment?* And chapter iii. 14, 15. *Ye have ſaid it is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it, that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hoſts? And now, we call the proud happy: yea, they that work wickedneſs are ſet up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.* Say they, Judgment hath left the earth, and the Lord is teſtifying that he delights in wickedneſs, when they ſee them that tempt God even delivered, and the workers of wickedneſs exalted: Then, ſay they, it is in vain for us to keep his ordinances; and what profit have we by ſo doing? The affliction that hath befallen the church, in our day, hath made many ſay this, that they think wickedneſs will never come down; and we muſt caſt in our lot, and take part with the reſt: This is a very ſad quandry and non-plus, that it puts people unto; and ſhould we not be much concerned with this?

7. Zion's children ought to be concerned much with her afflictions, becauſe of their filial and brotherly feeling which calls thereunto: Should not a child be very concerned, when his mother is toſſed, and troubled, and herried? If a mother were in her wounds, were it not a great unconcernedneſs, if her ſons were not troubled and concerned with her caſe? Jer. ix. 1. *Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the ſlain of the daughter of my people,* Brotherly ſympathy and fellow-feeling calls to this great concernedneſs with the afflictions of the church. And now, beloved, ſeeing there are ſuch reaſons, ſeeing this is a great day, when the church is rebuked, be concerned with her afflictions; the unconcerned perſons, on whoſe hearts the afflictions of God's church lie not near, are the perſons with whom the Lord is diſpleaſed: for, believe me, unconcernedneſs with the church of God, goes before enmity: Let me ſee a man unconcerned this day, and I will let you ſee a man that will turn an enemy the next day: Let not this appear a hard ſaying; for in the prophecy of Obadiah, ye will ſee it fully cleared; for, ver. 11. it is ſaid, *They ſtood*

on

on the other ſide; but verſe 14. their open enmity is pointed *by cutting off thoſe that did eſcape, and delivering up thoſe that did remain in the day of diſtreſs.* Ye ſee then, that firſt they ſtood upon the other ſide, and unconcerned perſons, and then afterwards proved open enemies. So we ſee, that thoſe who are unconcerned this day, next day they will run away to enemies courts. But, ye will ſay, may we not anſwer to their courts and clear ourſelves of ſuch things as we are clear of? I anſwer,

(1.) Such men are not competent to call you to their courts; and yet your going there ſays, ye hold them as competent judges.

(2.) Though they were competent judges for civil things, yet they are no ways competent to judge in matters concerning which ye are to be interrogated of. But,

(3.) That which ye ſeek to clear yourſelves of, it is not to your credit to clear yourſelves of. But ye will ſay unto me, May we not ſwear that which is truth, about ſuch matters and perſons? I will tell you what that oath implies, and it is this, That it was your advantage not to ſee them, and that ye look upon it as your duty, not to own them, nor to help them, nor to converſe with them Many will ſay, that they were not at Bothwel; and, may I not declare, ſay ye, that it is true? It may be, ye were not at Bothwel; but, if ye would not wrong and betray the cauſe of God to the enemies when ye come before them to declare this, ye ſhould avowedly add, But that was my great ſin. In many things the Iſraelites were a very unconcerned people; and what comes of it at length; They went and ſet up the calves at Dan and Bethel: So, many of you are come here unconcernedly, this night, and we will hear tell of you next day, that ye are away to the teſted curates. This is a point that I would dwell a little upon; and that by propounding this queſtion to you, and anſwering it.

You will have it to ſay, poſſibly, How ſhall we be concerned with the afflictions of the people of God? It is a neceſſary queſtion, and I will tell you four things that are neceſſary to right concernedneſs with the afflictions of the people of God: And,

1. If ſo be, that ye would be rightly concerned with the afflictions of the people of God, then be more concerned with your ſin and with your calamity: We read what Ephraim did when he ſaw his ſickneſs, and Judah ſaw his wound; then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to king Jareb; but what follows? *yet cou'd he not heal them nor cure them of their wound*, Hoſ. v. 13. They were ſenſible of their calamity, but not of their ſin, and therefore they took a wrong courſe; theſe who are more concerned with calamity than with

with ſin, will readily take a ſinful courſe, that they may win out of it. O! be more concerned with your ſin than with your calamity. If ye aſk the reaſon why ſo many comply? This is it, in ſhort, they are more ſenſible of calamity than of ſin; if ye were ſenſible of ſin, ye would not do it: Will ye ſhew yourſelves more ſenſible of your ſin, and more concerned with it, than with your calamities. O! then be perſuaded to cry out very much for the greatneſs of the ſin, which hath extorted ſuch ſtrokes from God; are theſe his ways? chaſtiſements are not the ways in which God delights: The language of our hearts, when we receive the rod upon our back, ſhould not be for the ſharpneſs of it, but for the ſins that have procured it.

2. If ye would be helped to a right concernedneſs, be more taken up with the ſufferings of the name of God than with your own ſufferings, Pſal. lxxiv. 8. *They ſaid in their heart, let us deſtroy them together; they have burnt up all the ſynagogues in the land.* When he ſays the firſt, *viz. Let us deſtroy them together*, he would add this, But what is the matter of that? but when it is added, *They have burnt up God's ſynagogues:* This ſays indeed, that our ſufferings are but a ſmall buſineſs in reſpect of God's being diſhonoured, his name blaſphamed, and his work deſtroyed. Men perſecute Chriſt in his members; but ye ſhould be more concerned with the ſufferings of God's name, than with your own ſufferings, if ye would be rightly concerned with the church's afflictions.

3. If ye would be helped to be concerned with the church's diſtreſſed caſe, then ye muſt alſo be ready to contribute any thing ye can, to the rebuilding of the broken work of God. Is this the language of your heart to the Lord, to ſay with Peter, Acts iii. 6. *Silver and gold have I none; but ſuch as I have give I thee.* Ye will ſay we are a poor waſted remnant, what can we give? But will ye ſay this, though we have not means nor fortunes to beſtow upon the work; yet, behold, we have heads and hands, and theſe will we beſtow upon it: We have heads and hands, for ſtones; and legs and limbs, for timber; and blood, for cementing; and theſe will we give.

4. Ye muſt be as concerned with your brothers ſufferings, as with your own ſufferings; Ah! Ah! I fear that brethrens ſufferings lie not very near your hearts; when one member ſuffers, ſhould not all the members ſuffer with it? Are we not all members of one body? How can the members of one body be ſo divided, as not to ſympathize with one another? Be therefore concerned with the ſufferings of others, if ye would be concerned with the ſufferings of the people of God.

Now, in the next place, I would give you ſome helps whereby ye may learn to win to be rightly concerned. And,

1. If

1. If ye would be rightly concerned, ye muſt once come, and be a right ſon or daughter of the church, and member of Jeſus Chriſt; until then, ye cannot have a fellow-feeling of the body. Come then, and Chriſt will give you a fellow-feeling with the ſufferings of the church. Come, and embrace himſelf, and he will ſet the ſtamp of natural children upon you. Without him ye can do nothing; without him ye cannot be concerned with the ſufferings of his name and members; refuſe not, and reject not his offers, when he calls you to himſelf. It is hard to wit, if ſome of you ſhall have an offer again; now is the acceptable time, now is the day of ſalvation; he is now ſpreading his net, and will ye not come about the net's mouth, that a catch of you may be gotten? He is proclaiming unto you that he hath invincible power, though managed by apparent weakneſs. O! find ye any of this irreſiſtable power of Chriſt? O! come unto him, who is the joy of heaven, and it ſhall be a joyful night in heaven; he will have a good report of you through heaven, if he ſhall have it to ſay, that ſome poor lad or laſs hath put a crown upon his head in ſuch a place. But, Oh! how ſad ſhall it be if Chriſt ſhall have it to ſay, I gave offer of myſelf to a people like ſtocks and ſtones, but they would not hear. This will help you to concernedneſs, once to become true ſons of your mother church.

2. Study to know the ſinfulneſs and hatefulneſs of ſin; for it is the ſenſe of ſin, that muſt produce concernedneſs with ſin. O! ſtudy to have a ſight of the hatefulneſs and ſinfulneſs of ſin, for God is declaring his hatred againſt ſin; for he is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity. O! be ſenſible therefore of ſin, and hate it.

3. Study a continual ſight of the precioufneſs of the cauſe. Many of you think it a cauſe wherein you may come and go; ye look upon it as man's cauſe. O! were ye ſenſible of the precioufneſs of the cauſe, ye would think otherwiſe. O! were ye ſenſible of the precioufneſs of the cauſe, as it is Chriſt's cauſe, before ye would quit one pendicle of it, ye would rather quit with a hundred heads and lives, I ſay ye muſt have a continued ſight of the precioufneſs of his cauſe.

4. See that ye count all the pieces of the coſt. Be not like that fooliſh builder, that began to build, and was not able to finiſh. Be not like a fooliſh warrior, who ſitteth not down by the way, to ſee, if with ten thouſand he be able to meet the other with twenty thouſand. Alſo, count the coſt, that whatſoever may befal you in the way, it ſhall not ſurpriſe you; this will help to great concernedneſs. Lay theſe things to heart, ſeeing there are ſuch weighty reaſons for it, ſuch as, the declaration of God's wrath, the ſufferings of God's glory, ſeeing ſin ſo much abounds, ſeeing the enemy is ſo inſo-

inſolent, ſeeing many are put to a hard non-plus, and ſeeing fellow-feelings calls for it: Therefore ſtudy much concernedneſs with the church's condition. The third doctrine from that head, is this:

DOCT. III. *The Lord uſeth to lay his church low, before he deliver them; and he uſeth to chaſten his people very ſore, before he change his way of dealing with them.*

It is ſaid, Hoſea xiv. 3. *In thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy;* That is to ſay, he will have his people low, before he exalt them. He deals as the prieſts under the law, who took the heave offering, and waved it, there and here, hither and thither, and then lifted it up; ſo he takes and toſſes his church, as if he would not leave a bit of it together. But here ye will aſk, What is the reaſon that he lays them ſo low, before he begin to deliver them? For anſwer to this, take theſe reaſons.

1. He brings his church low, before he begin to deliver them, that he may get his people brought of all viſible helps, Jer. iii. 23. *Truly in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* Folk are ready to put their truſt in viſible means; but God will have all that which is the object ſenſe out of the way. This is the Lord's purpoſe to take our eye off inſtruments and all viſible helps, that we may learn that in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of the mountains; the Lord plagues means, when they are doated on; and when they are plagued of the Lord, they are uſeleſs creatures; Hence that word, Hoſea viii. 18. *For Iſrael hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities; but I will ſend a fire upon his cities, and it ſhall devour the palaces thereof.* The Lord behoved to ſend a fire on the fenced cities, that they might be taught not to rely on them any more.

2. He brings his people low, that he may get them taught to fix their eyes on him alone for help. Be their caſe never ſo low, their is enough in him for their recovery. He cannot be put to difficulties; his hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave: But as he teacheth them in the fore-cited place, *That in vain is ſalvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains;* yet he teacheth them, that there is help enough in himſelf, that having their eyes of all viſible things, they might fix them on God.

3. That ſo he may make his people fitted objects of his mercy; according to that word Hoſ. xiv. 3. *In thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy.* It is miſerable folk that findeth mercy; therefore he layeth them low, that they may be the objects of his mercy.

4. He lays his people low, before he deliver them, that we may be made fit objects for his opening of the bowels of his ſympathy to us; For Chriſt is waiting to be gracious, and to

open the bowels of his ſympathy to us. The more law that we are, the more occaſion hath he for this, Zech. ii. 8. *After the glory hath he ſent me unto the nations that ſpoiled you: For he that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* The meaning is this, after his church, which is his declarative glory, was ſpoiled by theſe nations, then Chriſt was ſent unto theſe nations, to ſpoil them; becauſe he had occaſion to teſtify his ſympathy with his people, he that toucheth you his church, toucheth the apple of his eye, which is a moſt tender part. Here is great ſympathy; ay, indeed, he makes himſelf glorious in their delivery, when they are low, that he may get all the praiſe of their delivery, Zech ii 9. *For behold I will ſhake my hand upon them, and they ſhall be a ſpoil to their ſervants, and ye ſhall know that the Lord of hoſts hath ſent me.* It is Chriſt that is here ſpeaking, that he may manifeſt that he was ſent of his Father, to be the Redeemer of, and Mediator for, his church. It is, that Chriſt may manifeſt his atributes to his church; for, his infinite power would not be ſeen, in raiſing them up, were they not brought to a hopeleſs-like caſe, as to ſenſe. He would not get all the praiſe, if they were inſtruments for it. This is the reaſon that he lays them low, that his hand alone may be ſeen in their deliverance: Even as it was with the Iſraelites, when out of that great army of Gideon's he chooſed only three hundred, leſt that the Iſraelites ſhould have aſcribed the victory to their power. Thus it is that he may have occaſion to manifeſt his attributes, and ſhew his arm, wherein his everlaſting ſtrength; that ſo he may get all the praiſe He layeth them low, that ſo it may be ſung, as it is, Pſalm cxv. 1. *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.*

5. That he may teach his people faith to believe in him, in all caſes of extremity: Hence when the Iſraelites were in extremity, the Lord minds them of their former extremity, when they were in Egypt, and of the Lord's delivering them when they were there, and hearing their prayers there; and he puts them in remembrance of what he did for them; and, had they not been ſo non pluſſed, the Lord had not gotten occaſion to manifeſt himſelf for them; nor had they been ſo fitted for new trials: And thus they were made, like David, to ſay, 1 Sam. xvii. 37. *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philiſtine.* He brings a day of great trouble, before he deliver, that Jacob may truſt in him all the days of his trouble.

6. That then when he delivers, he may the more confound his enemies. It is a great ſurprizal to enemies, when they are ſaying, as it were, we have no more to trouble us, while ſuddenly their proſperous ſtate is turned into miſery or adverſity.

After

After that David had been ſpeaking of the proſperous ſtate of the wicked, he clearly points out what will befall them, ſaying, Pſal. lxxiii. 19, 20. *How are they brought into deſolation, as in a moment? They are utterly conſumed with terrors: As a dream when one awaketh, ſo, O Lord, when thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their image.* The higher enemies are lifted up, the ſadder and ſorer ſhall their fall be; like a man falling from the top of a ſteeple, whoſe fall is greater, than if he had fallen but the height of one houſe. He will give a ſtroke unto enemies, that will confound them; the higher enemies are, they ſhall be the more confounded. When God ſhall plead his controverſy with them, they ſhall be in ſuch a caſe, that they ſhall not know what hand to turn them to.

7. That he may teach all ſucceeding generations to learn this, that the proſperity of the wicked is very uncertain, and their advancement goes before their ruin and fall. He will learn his people in following generations, that his enemies ſhall not ſtand, and that they ſtand upon ſlippery and ſliddery ſtones, and ſhall ſoon fall heels-over head. I ſhall detain you no longer, but ſhall only name two words of uſe.

Uſe 1. Seeing God lays low, before he deliver, and delivers when low, then let not enemies rejoice at our low caſe; let them not inſult and ſay, Let us perſecute them, for God hath forſaken them. Though we fall, we ſhall ariſe; tho' we ſit in darkneſs, yet the Lord will be a light unto us. Believe it, the lower our caſe be, the nearer is their deſtruction. Our low caſe is a fore runner of their fall and ruin; there is not ſuch matter of boaſting, as enemies imagine; though we fall, we ſhall ariſe.

Uſe 2. Ye that are the people of God, deſpond not at your low condition; the lower your caſe is, he ſhall get the more glory in delivering of you. Rejoice in your low caſe, becauſe it makes for the manifeſtation of God's attributes: Rejoice, becauſe God ſhall be exalted in your delivery; for, the lower ye are brought, the more glory ſhall redound to him, when ye ſhall be redeemed out of all your tronbles. Unto him be praiſe.

SERMON XVIII.

JEREMIAH XXX. 7.

Alas! for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he ſhall be ſaved out of it.

IT is a comfort to the people of God, that, be it with them as it will, their help is in him; Whatever their caſe be, he can help them in it, Iſa. lix. 1. *Behold the Lord's hand is not ſhortened, that it cannot ſave.* There is not a caſe at all, that the people of God can be in, that can put him to a non-plus or difficulting extremity. Moreover there is not a caſe at all that the people of God can be in, but he will deliver them out of it: I ſay, there ſhall no trouble nor afflicted caſe befal them, out of which he is not ready to deliver them, albeit their complaint ſhall be ſuch as that in Jer. viii. 20. *The harveſt is paſt, the ſummer is ended, and we are not ſaved:* Yet he will ſave them even then; and although many be the troubles that afflict the juſt, yet the Lord will deliver them out of them all. Although this day of trouble be ſuch as none is like it, yet Jacob ſhall be ſaved out of it.

I had formerly ſome occaſion to be on theſe words, and divided them into two heads; the firſt whereof contained the greatneſs of the trouble of the church and people of God: It is ſo great, that they did not meet with the like of it before; and this was a caſe of great concernedneſs to all the children of God. To this head I ſpake a little, laying down ſome doctrines and uſes from the ſame, and by raiſing ſome neceſſary queſtions, which now I ſhall not reſume. Howbeit, ſome may remember, that, at the laſt occaſion, I was giving ſome reaſons, why it was the Lord's manner of way with his church and people, to bring them very low, before he deliver them: And now I proceed to a ſecond head, *viz.* A promiſe of delivery, notwithſtanding of the greatneſs of their trouble, *But he ſhall be delivered out of it.* Hence I lay down this firſt doctrine from it:

DOCT. I. *That when the Lord minds to deliver his people, nothing will ſtand in the way of it.* Zech. iv. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel, thou ſhalt become a plain.* When did the Lord mind to deliver his people? Even then, when that great mountain, the Perſian dominion, did prove as impediment in the way, and the Samaritan faction; then ſaith he unto them, that ſhall be ſo far from hindering, that

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it ſhall be made an help. The Lord takes the mountains, and caſts them into the valleys, to make up even ground, and ſo makes them helpful. There can be no mountains in the Lord's way, which he will not eaſily remove, when infinite love and infinite power ſtrike hands together. What mountains will ſtand then, when the feet of reconciliation begin to tread upon them? for they will then melt away; for all the troubles of the church are like a thick miſty cloud, before the riſing of the ſun; ſo that when the ſun ariſeth, it diſpelleth it, and the place of it is no more known. All the church's afflictions are ſuch at the Lord's appearing; they ſhall evaniſh, and though theſe your mountains be great in your eyes, yet they are not ſo in the Lord's eyes.

But it is like ſome of you will have this to ſay, O! are not many mountains ſtanding in the way of the Lord's coming to deliver us? Well, they are ſo; but, let me tell you, theſe ſhall not ſtand; and, that I may confirm the doctrine, and make it more clear, by applying it to our own caſe, I ſhall hold forth unto you ſome of theſe mountains that are in the way, and make it appear that theſe ſhall not ſtand. And,

1. It may be, that ye will ſay, The force and might of the enemies is a great mountain. It is true; but, remember what is ſaid, Zech. iv. 7. "Who art thou, O great mountain? "before Zerubbabel thou ſhalt become a plain;" When infinite love puts infinite power in execution, for the church's delivery, what will ſtand in the way? Iſa. xl. 6, 7. "The "voice ſaid, Cry; and he ſaid, What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is "graſs, and all the goodneſs thereof is as the flower of the "field. The graſs withereth, the flower fadeth, becauſe the "Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: Surely the people is "graſs." What is the adverſary then? Nothing but graſs: Can they ſtand before him when his breath blows upon them? Nay, they will wither and decay: Surely the people is graſs." Pſalm. ciii. 15, 16. "As for man, his days are as graſs, as a "flower in the field ſo he flouriſheth: For the wind paſſeth "over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it "no more."

Doth not the Pſalmiſt deſcribe unto us the cauſe of the wicked? Pſal. xxxvii. 35, 36. "I have ſeen the wicked in great "power, and ſpreading himſelf like a green bay tree: Yet "he paſſed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I ſought him, "but he could not be found." The enemies, in all their might and multitude, are but as graſs in the Lord's ſight, and ſhall no more hinder his ſickle of juſtice, than graſs hinders the ſickle of him that moweth it down.

Think not that theſe wicked powers can ſtand in the Lord's way as mountains; all their combinations, train bands, and con-

confederacies, their ſoldiers, dragoons, and malitia, will not ſtand before him; he need do no more but breathe upon them, and they ſhall wither; the breath of his noſtrils will eaſily conſume them.

2. The ſecond mountain which ye may ſpeak of, is, our diviſions. O! is it not a great mountain in the way of our delivery? Ay, that is true, but it ſhall not ſtand, Zeph. iii. 9. "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that "they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to ſerve him "with one conſent." Iſa xi. 13. "The envy alſo of Eph-"raim ſhall depart, and the adverſaries of Judah ſhall be cut "off; Ephraim ſhall not envy Judah, and Judah ſhall not "vex Ephraim." Thus the Lord hath promiſed, and ſo it ſhall not ſtand in the way of the Lord's delivering of his church, and that in a due time; for he will take away our diviſions, by removing the cauſes of our diviſions, and will heal our breaches; he will either let men ſee their folly, in following backſliding courſes, or elſe remove theſe out of the way, if he ſees it not fit to put a ſtop to it another way; he will take away dividing men. What are ſuch men like? They are like thoſe ſpoken of, Ezek. xiii. 10. one built up a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar; but it is added, the wall ſhall fall, and a ſtormy wind ſhall rend it: Then ſhall it be ſaid, as ver. 12. Where is the daubing where-with ye have daubed it? Then ſhall it be ſaid, as in ver. 15. The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it. O! that men would think upon this, who are pleading for a ſhadow of peace, under that malignant intereſt: When God brings forth his ſtormy wind on that wall, to throw it down, where will they appear? It ſhall be ſaid, where is the wall? and where are they that daubed it? He will remove that malig-nancy that hath divided the land, he will remove the indul-gency that hath divided the land. I ſay, believe it, for that day will come, wherein many ſhall be aſhamed for cleaving ſo cloſe to their defective courſes; he will remove theſe per-ſons, he will remove the ſtumbling blocks with the wicked, he will remove them with theſe, before the church's delivery.

3. The third mountain is, the mountain of our guilt; that is a great hinderance in the way; but neither ſhall that ſtand in the way; for his feet of reconciliation will make that mountain to melt: Hath he not ſaid. Iſa. xliii. 25. "I, even "I, am he, that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions for mine own "ſake, and will not remember thy ſins!" He ſhews himſelf to be a God, boundleſs in mercy, to forgive and alſo to for-get their iniquities. Hath he not ſaid, Hoſ. xiv. 4. "I will heal their backſlidings, I will love them freely!" and Ezek. xviii. 21. "But if the wicked will turn from all his ſins that

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"he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that "which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not "die?" The Lord will batter down theſe mountains. O! then, would ye have him to batter them down? Then remember what he hath ſaid in the forecited place, Ezek xviii. 21. forſake ſin and fear his name; and I make an offer in his name, of his mercy unto you, in that word, Iſa. i. 18. "Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, "though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as "ſnow, though they be like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool." Compare this with Zech. xiii. 1. "In that day, there ſhall be "a fountain opened to the houſe of David, and to the inha- "bitants of Jeruſalem, for ſin and for uncleanneſs." Whatever be your ſins, come unto Jeſus Chriſt, and ye ſhall not be put away: Though each one of you had the ſins of a whole congregation, ye ſhall have pardon: Remember the virtue that is in that fountain, that ye are invited to come to; he will pardon all your ſins waſh away all your guilt, and heal all your backſlidings. O! it is virtuous; not only doth it waſh away the guilt of ſin, but alſo remove the conſequences of ſin: Shall ſuch mercies be offered to you, and will ye refuſe them? O! fooliſh people, who undervalued ſuch great mercies: Ah! go not away fools when ye come here in the hazard of your lives; but accept of Jeſus Chriſt; for, in a word if ye will take Chriſt, and the fountain of his merits for waſhing away your iniquities, remember he hath told you, he will heal your backſlidings, and love you freely. O! for the glory of his name, and your own ſalvation, ſit not the call now when he is coming in the garments of ſalvation. O! take him in that dreſs, otherwiſe his next coming will be in garments dyed with blood.

4. The fourth mountain, which is in the way, is even a great indiſpoſition for the Lord's coming and delivering us; yet hath he not told us, Hoſ. xiv. 4. that he will heal our backſlidings, and that by pardoning guilt, and removing the power of ſin, and by removing our ſpiritual judgments! therefore the indiſpoſition of his people for delivery, is ſuch a mountain as ſhall not ſtand in the way, though it be a great mountain; yea, the ſtrong and great King ſhall batter down theſe for infinite love, and infinite power, are able to batter down theſe: He can deliver in ſuch a manner, as his delivery ſhall diſpoſe for itſelf: When his people ſhall be delivered, they ſhall be a humble people; for his deliverance ſhall make them moſt ſenſible of their ſin; howbeit there are ſome, that are not ſeeking a diſpoſition for a delivery; theſe are very great fools. Some again look not to free grace bringing about a delivery, and working a diſpoſition for that diſ-

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penſation, and they lay too much ſtreſs upon external and outward reformation: But, as we would ſtudy inwardly and outwardly to reform ourſelves, according to the word of God; ſo, we ought to lay no ſtreſs upon any thing we can do: We muſt not think, though we could get ourſelves ſhaken free of all the abominations of the time, that we can move God to deliver us: No, it muſt be nothing in us: How will it be, then, that he will deliver his church? It will be, by loving them freely, and pardoning all their iniquity, Hoſ. xiv. 4. This love in him is both able to bring about that delivery, and work that diſpoſition for a delivery. Indiſpoſition ſhall not ſtand in the way; for if it cannot be wrought another way, he will work a diſpoſition by the delivery itſelf. Ah! it is ſadly true; we are not fit for a delivery; all that hath come on us, hath not humbled us: but, I ſay, free grace can do this thing, albeit all former pains have not done it. The Lord can make our deliverance do it, though all that hath come yet hath not done it; yet, when his time comes, this mountain ſhall not ſtand in his way.

5. The fifth mountain, which ſhall not ſtand in the way, is, the blae marks of God's diſpleaſure upon us, Joel ii. 25. *And I will reſtore to you the years that the locuſt hath eaten, the canker-worm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army, which I ſent among you.* They were a people which had many a blae mark of the Lord's diſpleaſure upon them; yet he ſays, he will reſtore what they had loſt; for, he can ſoon turn himſelf graciouſly to his people, Zeph. iii. 13. *Behold, at that time, I will undo all that afflict thee, and I will ſave her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out, and I will get them praiſe and fame in every land, where they have been put to ſhame:* Theſe were a people that had many blae marks of the Lord's diſpleaſure; for, (1.) They were driven out. (2.) They were ſcattered here and there. (3.) They were reproached by enemies, *&c.* Yet he ſays, I will ſave her that halteth, *&c.* and get them praiſe and fame. The Lord, by appearing and doing for his people, can ſoon do away theſe tokens of his diſpleaſure, and the marks of his indignation; ſo that they may not hinder him.

6. The ſixth mountain, is, the want of inſtruments, and helps for this work; but neither ſhall this mountain ſtand in his way, Obad. ver. 18. *But upon Mount Zion ſhall be deliverance.* Verſe 21, *And ſaviours ſhall come upon Mount Zion, to judge the mount of Eſau, and the kingdom ſhall be the Lord's.* He can take a man from the plough or barn-floor, and make him an inſtrument of greateſt works: Howbeit, he will not let the want of inſtruments ſtand in the way. Let not the want of inſtruments diſcourage you: for, when God deſigns to bring about the deliverance of his church, his ordinary way

way is to lay by inſtruments, becauſe much uſe of them would make his hand obſcure in the action; and ſo the praiſe ſhould not be given him. Remember what he did to Iſrael, in the time of Gideon; he then lays aſide all the army, except three hundred men, that unto him might be aſcribed all the praiſe of the action. The want of inſtruments ſhall prepare the Lord's people for the deliverance, in the mean time when inſtruments are leaſt ſeen; that is the time that Chriſt appears moſt for his people. Hath he not called you to remember what is ſaid, Iſa. lix 19. *And he ſaw that there was no man, and wondred that there was no interceſſor; therefore his arm brought ſalvation unto him, and his righteouſneſs ſuſtained him.* Verſe 17. *For he put on righteouſneſs as a breaſt-plate, and an helmet of ſalvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak:* When was all this? Even when he ſaw none concerned with his people's caſe. It is a noble inference indeed, he ſaw no man as inſtruments, therefore his own arm brought ſalvation. O! ſirs, fear not theſe mountains, the want of inſtruments; God can work without inſtruments; for, as he can work with inſtruments; ſo he can alſo work without them. But now, let me preſs home this duty with a twofold uſe.

Uſe 1. Seeing it is ſo, that nothing can ſtand in the way of the Lord's delivering of his church, then ſilence all your doubts and miſbelieving of him, Zech. ii. 13. *Be ſilent O all fleſh before the Lord; for he is raiſed up out of his holy habitation.* Silence your doubts and miſbelieving thoughts; for, the might of adverſaries, the diviſions of the land, the blae marks of his indignation, the want of inſtruments, the guilt of his people, *&c.* ſhall not ſtand in the way of his church's deliverance: Silence your fears and doubts. *Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerrubbable thou ſhalt become a plain.* Hath he not ſaid this, and ſhould ye not believe it? Then ſilence all the language of your miſbelieving hearts.

Uſe 2. Is it ſo, that nothing can ſtand in the way of the Lord's delivering of his church and people? Then, as ye are not to miſbelieve, ſo be not ſlack-handed, Zeph. iii. 16. *In that day it ſhall be ſaid to Jeruſalem, fear thou not; and Zion, let not thine hands be ſlack.* Theſe two are joined together, fear, and ſlack-handedneſs: Therefore on the contrary, the want of fear, and diligence, ſhould go together: So, I ſay, beloved as ye ought not to fear and miſbelieve, ye ought to beware alſo of ſlack-handedneſs. Remember what is recorded of that war betwixt Iſrael and Amelek, Exod. xvii. 11. *And it came to paſs when Moſes held up his hand, that Iſrael prevailed; and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed.*

Let not your hands fall down; for, the falling down of the hands of the Lord's people gives great advantage to enemies: Believe me, the Lord is ſeeking that ye ſhould be diligent, according to that word, Iſa. lxii 6, 7. "He that make mention of the Lord, keep not ſilence, and give him no reſt "till he eſtabliſh, and till he make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the "earth."

The ſecond doctrine from the ſecond head is this, *That the delivery of the church and people of God is certain*, Obad. ver. 17. "But upon mount Zion ſhall be a deliverance." Zeph. iii. 17. "The Lord thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty." Iſaiah xxxv. 4. "Say to them that are of a fearful heart. Be ſtrong "fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, "even God with a recompence he will come and ſave you." There are many promiſes he hath made, where WILL and SHALL is recorded; which holds forth the certainty of his church and people's delivery. But, what delivery is it, that is abiding his people? In what ſenſe doth he deliver his people? I will tell you the firſt delivery even in time is abiding his people: How many times delivered he the people of Iſrael out of the hands of the enemies, out of the hands of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, out of the hands of the Philiſtines and Midianites, &c. And albeit that he hath caſt us into the furnace now, yet he hath formerly delivered us from under Antichriſtian tyranny, and he will yet deliver us; and I will give you ſome reaſons, whereby it ſhall appear that he will deliver his church in general.

1. His faithfulneſs is engaged in it, 2 Tim. ii. 12, 13. *If we ſuffer we ſhall alſo reign with him—If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf.* Whatever ſtands in the way, his faithfulneſs is engaged in it, and he will not ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail, nor his promiſe to fall to the ground.

2. Becauſe his holineſs is engaged in it, Hab. i. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.* Why doth the prophet mention the Lord's holineſs? To ſtrengthen his faith in this, that God would puniſh the Babylonians, and help Iſrael; for, if he did not deliver his people, they would be ready to think there were no hazard in ſin, nor any advantage in following of righteouſneſs; but he will deliver his people, that it may be ſeen there is a righteous Judge in the earth, Pſalm lviii. 11. As his holineſs engages him to puniſh his enemies: So, it engages him to deliver his people; and, as it puts him to puniſh his people for ſin; ſo, it puts him to deliver his people that the enemies may not begin to think that he winks at their iniquities.

3. Becauſe of what is laid upon his name, by the adverſaries: Now, that he may vindicate his glory and free his name

name from the reproach and blaſphemy of man, he delivers his church from oppreſſion; for, when his church is in trouble his name is made to ſuffer; his enemies are then ſaying to his people, *Where is your God?* Pſalm xlii. 3. which thing made the Pſalmiſt's heart to quake and tremble: He doth it, that he may vindicate his glorious name from theſe affronts that are caſt upon it: So then, when his church and people ſuffer, he will give deliverance to his people, even in time. But, remember as a caution,

(1.) That his people is not to expect compleat deliverance in time, either from outward or inward enemies: for, tho' he gives his people ſometimes the upper-hand of enemies, yet they will not get them utterly rooted out; even as the Iſraelites were not able to extirpate the Canaanites wholly; ſo, I ſay, there will be always a devil to raiſe troubles, while his church is in warefare.

(2.) I will tell you what a delivery is abiding his church, a compleat full and perfect deliverance, at the end of time, Rev. vii. 14. *Theſe are they who came out of great tribulations, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.* There is a compleat delivery notwithſtanding of all their troubles in time: The Lord's people ſhall win through them, into that land where all tears ſhall be wiped away from their eyes; *viz.* to the holy and heavenly Canaan where no enemies can enter to trouble them. No ſooner ſhall his people lift their feet out of death's waters, but all troubles ſhall be left behind, they ſhall purſue them no farther; ſo that if ſome of his people meet not with a deliverance in time, yet after death they ſhall meet with it compleatly. O! how ſatisfying is this, that is ſaid of them, Theſe are they which have waſhed their robes in the blood of the Lamb? There is no fear of adverſaries riſing up againſt them; there they ſhall follow the Lamb, with palms in their hands; for there they have obtained a compleat victory. Heaven is a reſt from ſin and ſorrow, from temptations and tribulations, but no reſt from joy and praiſe. But let me now lay this home upon you, with a twofold uſe.

Uſe 1. Since it is ſo, that the Lord will deliver his people in time; then, wait upon that delivery, Hab. ii. 3. *For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie: Though it tarry: wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* I ſay, even becauſe a compleat delivery is certain, therefore wait for it patiently; though the viſion tarry, it ſhall come.

Uſe 2. Seeing that it is ſo, that there ſhall be a compleat delivery after time, regard no trouble or affliction in time: What is the matter, though ye have no delivery in time? Regard not your loſs of periſhing things, nor the ſufferings

in this life, be what they will, wanderings, impriſonments, and death; for ye ſhall have a compleat deliverance in the end; but all your enemies ſhall not now be removed from you, but there they ſhall: They ſhall follow you no farther than to the borders of death. Many are the troubles that afflict the juſt, but the Lord ſhall deliver them out of them all. So, then, it is certain that his people ſhall have a compleat deliverance; yea, it is very certain, though they ſhould endure affliction to the end of their days, it is not comparable to eternity: O! then, regard not what ſufferings ye can be put to in time, ſince your happineſs ſhall endure to eternity. I thought to have proceeded further; but I ſhall forbear.

PREFACE.

THERE are many looking for a deliverane; but, for my part, I look for no ſuch thing yet: I will not ſay, but they may be inſtruments to cut off ſome of our Lord's enemies; but I trow we ſhall not have much to crack of them, when all is done. But, if ye will look for the deliverance aright, look for four things to come before it, and they ſhall come ſhortly:

1. The cup muſt go round; round muſt the cup go; it is begun at the houſe which is called by his name, but it ſhall go round; ſome there are, who have refuſed it, but they ſhall drink it; the nearer the brim, the ſweeter; the nearer the bottom, the bitterer; unmixed, unmixed ſhall many of this generation drink it; all ranks ſhall taſte of it; yea, that abominable tyrant on the throne, ſhall taſte of it; and that chancellor ſhall taſte of it; prelates ſhall taſte of it, our malignants and indulged ſhall taſte of it; and our own folk ſhall taſte of it.

2. The land ſhall be laid deſolate; deſolate ſhall the land be.

3. There ſhall be no airth to look to, neither hills, mountains, nor armies.

4. His cauſe ſhall be rightly ſtated; but ye may ſay, if the cup muſt go round, if the land muſt be laid deſolate, and if there be no airth to look to, by whom then ſhall his cauſe be ſtated? It ſhall be by a remnant whom he ſhall ſpare, whom he

he ſhall honour to ſtate his cauſe aright; and then may ye expect his back-coming to Britain and Ireland. There may be ſome poor body ſaying, If the cup muſt go round, if the land muſt be laid deſolate, if no airth to look to, and his cauſe ſhall be rightly ſtated, what then ſhall I do? My counſel to you is, get an intereſt made ſure in Chriſt, that ſo ye may find ſhelter under the ſhadow of his wings.

SERMON XIX.

JEREMIAH XXX. 7.

Alas! for that day is great, ſo that none is like it: It is even the time of Jacob's trouble, but he ſhall be ſaved out of it.

THEY are in a very miſerable condition, whom God brings to the furnace, and leaves there; that is a lamentable condition, which ye will find recorded, Ezek. xxii. 18, 19, 20. "The houſe of Iſrael is become to me droſs; all "they are braſs and tin, and iron in the midſt of the fur-"nace, they are even the droſs of ſilver. Behold, therefore, "I will gather you into the midſt of Jeruſalem. As they "gather ſilver and braſs, and iron and lead and tin, into the "midſt of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it to melt it; "ſo will I gather you in mine anger, and I will leave you "there." Here we have a catalogue of Jeruſalem's ſins reckoned up, and the threatnings againſt them; the ſum is this, The Lord will bring them to the furnace, and leave them there. It is a ſad and miſerable caſe, to be brought to the furnace, and to be left there of God: But O! they are in a moſt happy caſe, whatever fleſh and blood think of it, whom God brings to the furnace, and ſtays with, and does not forſake, but manifeſts his glorious purpoſe to them; his condeſcendency to them by that furnace, in making them more fit for himſelf and for his uſe, as a goldſmith doth with a curious piece of work; he caſts it into the fire, that he may cauſe it loſe the droſs, that it may be for his own uſe; ſo the Lord caſts his own into the furnace, that they may come out more fit for him; in this he manifeſts his condeſcendency to them, in not leaving them in the furnace; but purgeth and puri-

purifieth, according to his promiſe, Joſh i. 5. "I will not "fail thee, nor forſake thee:" alſo Iſa. xliii. 2. "When thou "paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee, and thro' "the rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee; when thou walk-"eſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall "the flames kindle upon thee. Ye ſee the Lord brings his people to the furnace, but he leaves them not there; he is ſo far from leaving them there, that he brings them out thereof. Although he brings a day of great trouble and perplexity on Jacob, yet he delivers Jacob out of it: *Alas! for that day is great:* but he ſhall be ſaved out of it.

I cannot now take time to reduce what hath been already ſaid from theſe words, only I remember they were divided into two parts.

Firſt, Concerning the ſad caſe of Jacob, or the Lord's people here, containing the great meaſure of their great trouble, which was ſingular in matter of concernedneſs: *Alſo! for that day.*

And the ſecond head contained a promiſe of delivery, notwithſtanding the ſadneſs of the caſe, *But he ſhall be ſaved out of it.*

We handled the firſt head a little, and proceeded to a ſecond, and laid down a ſecond doctrine, which was this,

DOCT. *That notwithſtanding of all difficulties and oppoſitions, yet the Lord when he minds, will deliver his people, there ſhall nothing ſtand in the way of it*: And this was a little ſpoken to; then,

DOCT. II. *That this delivery of the Lord's people is certain.* This we ſhewed that it was not only certain, when the Lord gives them a compleat victory, and places them beyond the reach of affliction, and traſplants them into eternal happineſs; but the Lord's people may even expect deliverance in time. Now, I ſhall inlarge a little on this, by application of the doctrine to us.

1. By ſhewing ſome grounds, from whence we may gather the certainty of the delivery of this church.

2. By ſhewing ſomewhat of the manner of it.

3. A word of uſe for ſuch as believe the ſame.

I ſay, in application of the doctrine to us, that even the Lord's church in this land ſhall certainly be delivered out of their troubles; that the church ſhall meet with a delivery: I ſay, conſider theſe few grounds which may prove the ſame.

1. We are a people that is promiſed to Chriſt in a particular manner; this land is a promiſed land unto Chriſt, Pſal. ii. 8. *I will give thee the uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion:* Yea, and this is principally to be underſtood of theſe iſlands, which are in the utmoſt parts of the earth. It is alſo clear from Iſa. xlix. 1. *Liſten, O iſles unto me, and hearken, ye people from far, the Lord hath called me from the womb.* Verſe

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6. *Is it a light thing that thou ſhouldſt be my ſervant, to raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael; I will alſo give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation to the ends of the earth.* Alſo Iſa. xlii. 4. *He will not fail nor be diſcouraged, till he hath ſet judgment in the earth, and the iſles ſhall wait for his law.* Britain and Ireland ſhall wait for his law. Likewiſe Pſal. lxv. 6 *Thou art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and them that be affar upon the ſea.* All theſe hold out, in a very particular manner, that theſe lands are promiſed to Chriſt, and that we are a people promiſed to him; ſo, think not that he will quit that which is given to him; think not that he will let the bounds of his charter be ſo intrenched; let us rejoice that ever there was a line in the Old or New Teſtament pointing at Britain and Ireland's caſe: We are a promiſed people, and our land a promiſed land; and therefore we may expect the Lord will come to it again; we may expect, tho' it be a day of great trouble, *that we ſhall be ſaved out of it.*

2. We may expect it, as we are a covenanted people, Hoſ. xii. 9. *And I that am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the day of the ſolemn feaſts.* The Lord is there holding forth the promiſe of giving the Iſraelites a ſatisfactory delivery; and his bottoming it upon his covenant, which he entred into with them, when he brought them out of Egypt; ſo there was a covenant entred into with God by theſe lands, when we came out of Egyptian darkneſs; he with whom we entred in covenant, ſhall yet make us dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of old; ſo, that as our land is a promiſed land, ſo it is a dedicated land; all of us are dedicated to him; yea, all our goods and gear, yea, all our lives: But many of you have taken your word again, and given it to the enemies: But we are his, by right of explicate dedication; therefore it is certain that he will deliver this church out of trouble, though it be a great trouble.

3. It is certain, becauſe we are a people conquered by Chriſt, we are conquered, and that in a very coſtly manner; Chriſt loſt many a noble ſubject, before he conquered us out of antichriſtian tyranny, Pſal. cxxxvi. 12. *He brought them out with a ſtrong hand, and ſtretched out arm.* We came not out of theſe but by fighting, and ſtrong wreſtling; many a drop of precious blood was loſt, in bringing us out of that darkneſs, to be a covenanted land; think not then that what he hath ſo dearly bought, will be ſo eaſily quit; therefore he will certainly return, and bring us out of trouble, though it be a very great trouble.

4. It is certain that the ſaving and delivering his church out of trouble ſhall be, becauſe he is taking many ſacrifices off

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our hands; he is giving us pledges that he is about to deliver us, by taking pledges off our hands, Judges xiii. 21, 22, 23. When Manoah was ſore afraid by ſeeing the angel of the Lord, he concludes, *We ſhall ſurely die;* But his wife gets a far better ſight of it, ſaying, *If the Lord were pleaſed to ſlay us, he would not have received a meat-offering and a burnt-offering at our hands.* If the Lord had a mind to give up with us, and quite forſake us, he would not have received ſo many ſarcifices at his ſervants hands; he hath accepted ſacrifices on fields and ſcaffolds; he hath received ſacrifices by proteſtations and declarations; and he hath teſtified his acceptance of theſe, by countenancing of his people, when he brought them to ſcaffolds, to offer up themſelves a ſacrifice: How hath he been ſeen to make them rejoice, ſo that all that ſaw them could not but envy their lot? Many ways hath he teſtified his accepting of a ſacrifice at Scotland's hands; and theſe are pledges that he will yet return, and not deſtroy us.

5. The Lord will come and ſave us out of this trouble, tho' it be great, becauſe he is ſtill keeping up a witneſſing remnant, that he may ſay, Theſe are my witneſſes that I am God, notwithſtanding the great part of the land hath forſaken him; yet he is keeping up a remnant for truth; albeit the great part of the gentry hath left us, yet he wants not ſome to witneſs for him; notwithſtanding the great part of the miniſters hath left us, yet he wants not ſome to confeſs him, and to profeſs ſubjection to his cauſe; all which reacheth us ſome branches of hope.

6. God will certainly deliver out of this trouble, whereof alſo he gives us this branch of hope, by giving us many and great wonders in the furnace of affliction; he is letting us ſee his power, even in leading a remnant through between right and left hand rocks: We have many upon the left hand; indulged and indemnity-takers, with compliers, who are ſet up as ſo many rocks, which we ought to beware of: So alſo we have rocks on the right hand ſet up before us, and yet he hath kept a remnant from ſplitting upon theſe, like unto a ſkilful pilot, keeping his people from right and left hand rocks; yea, the feeding of his people, and doing for his people, and delivering them when brought, as it were, to the very ſnare, by plucking them, ſo to ſay, out of the very teeth of enemies; all this ſays that he will do greater things; and yet will appear for delivering this church out of trouble; yea, his wonders that he is manifeſting in preſerving a remnant from utter conſumption, is a ground of hope for this, according to that word, Pſal. cxi. 5. *He hath ſhewed his people the power of his works, that he might give them the heritage of the heathen.* Muſt we not ſay then, that the Lord's works of wonders for us in this wilderneſs ſhould be taken as pledg-

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es that he will give us the heritage of the heathen? Although it be a time of great trouble, *yet we ſhall be delivered out of it.*

7. He is reaching us this ground of hope, becauſe truth is delivered; it ſhall be more delivered; when we moſt ſeemingly fell, then truth was delivered; the Lord has gotten his cauſe moſt clearly ſtated in the land; we may date truth's delivery from our fall before our enemies at Bothwel-bridge, whence we ſaw clearly the danger of joining with them who had received favours from the enemies; the hazard of joining with the indulged, and taking in the malignant intereſt; many things were made to appear in their own colours, more than formerly; and afterwards the Lord had a proclamation, to ſee who would take truth by the hand; a proclamation, I ſay, publiſhed through the high-places of the fields. ſo that truth's delivery gives us ſome ground of hope that truth ſhall be delivered. Let us rejoice, we have this to ſay, That truth is delivered; what is the matter of our ſufferings, ſince truth is delivered.

8. The certainty of the church's delivery is in this, The very conſciences of enemies and compliers give teſtimony to truth's delivery; very enemies are made to ſay, Theſe only are the true preſbyterians, that ſo many are reproaching; and compliers themſelves ſay, That were it not for their necks and means, there would not be ſo many to contend againſt theſe things. But likely ſome compliers, who are come here to-day, may I ſay, I never heard ſuch a thing: But, O man and woman! let conſcience but ſpeak, and the things would ſoon be heard, Deut. xxx. 32. "For their rock is not as "our rock, even our enemies themſelves being judges."

9. The Lord certainly purpoſes to deliver us out of this trouble, as appears by his way of dealing in this land; he hath a promiſing work begun in the hearts of ſome young ones in this land, ſome young lads and laſſes up and down the land, Ezek. xiv. 2. "Behold therein ſhall be left a rem-"nant that ſhall be brought forth, both ſons and daughters: "Behold they ſhall come forth unto you, and ye ſhall ſee "their ways and their doings, and ye ſhall be comforted "concerning all the evils that I have brought upon Jeruſa-"lem; and they ſhall comfort you when ye ſee their ways "and their doings, and ye ſhall know that I have not done "without cauſe, all that I have done in it." I ſay, the Lord hath a young generation, whoſe ways and doings ſhall juſtify the remnant in all their contendings, and ſhew that the Lord's ways are right, and his doings juſt; this is a certain ground of hope, that he ſhall deliver his children. O! young ones, lads and laſſes, to your work, to your prayers; for ye ſhall go in and poſſeſs the promiſed land.

The *ſecond* thing we mentioned, was, to ſhew ſomething of the manner of the Lord's delivering us.

1. This delivery ſhall be ſudden; the pſalmiſt prays Pſalm cxxvi. 4. *Turn again our captivity like ſtreams in the ſouth:* Our delivery ſhall come as water down a ſteep place; it ſhall be ſudden, it ſhall come as a thief in the night, and as an armed man. It ſhall be ſudden on theſe two accounts.

1. In reſpect of his people, becauſe it ſhall come when they are leaſt expecting it, Deut. xxxii. 36. *The Lord ſhall judge his people, and repent himſelf for his ſervant's ſake, when he ſeeth their power is gone, and there is none ſhut up or left.* When his people ſees leaſt ground of viſible hope, then is the time he will come ſuddenly, with delivery: When all doors of viſible hope are ſhut, then will he come; it ſhall be an unexpected delivery, ſuch as, when Gideon ſubdued the Midianites with three hundred, and when Saul and Jonathan ſubdued the Philiſtines, when there was neither ſpear nor ſword among them but Saul and Jonathan's; and as it was in Jehoſophat's time, 2 Chron. xx. When the Moabites and Ammonites, and the children of mount Sier, invaded Judah; it ſhall come ſuddenly and unexpected; yea, though it may be delayed, it ſhall come when leaſt thought upon.

It ſhall be ſudden in reſpect of enemies, Mic vi 14. *And thy caſting down ſhall be in the midſt of thee: When they think leaſt to fall, then ſhall judgment from God be upon them;* as an armed man with coaths of vengeance, and a cloke of zeal, ſhall his coming be; then ſhall he come mounted upon the red horſe of vengeance and ſeverity, Belſhazzar little thought on judgment, when drinking and carouſing in the veſſels brought from the houſe of the Lord; then did the handwriting preſent itſelf. Expect a ſudden delivery; it ſhall come as a thief in the night; God can work a work in one night that ſhall be a delivery.

2. As it ſhall be ſudden, ſo it ſhall be ſeaſonable, (1.) Becauſe, if God ſhould deliver his people ſooner, then his people ſhould not be purged and purified, and would not be brought allenarly to look unto himſelf, Iſa. xxvii. 9. *By this ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged away;* he will take pains upon his people in the furnace, until he get them brought to ſome fitedneſs for himſelf; and is not this a ſeaſonable delivery? For, believe it, when he brings his people out of the furnace, before their droſs be taken away, it is in order to the caſting them into a more hot furnace.

3. It ſhall be ſeaſonable; becauſe, if he ſhould delay any longer, we ſhould be ready to give up the ghoſt. Zech. iii. 2. *Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire?* They were near to be conſumed in the furnace of affliction, and he ſteps in when they were as a ſtick half burnt, and plucks it out; it ſhall come

come at ſuch a time, that if the Lord ſhould delay any longer, we would be ready wholly to give over.

4. It ſhall be ſeaſonable, becauſe God will wait till all back-doors, that his people are ready to look ſinfully unto, ſhall be ſhut. Some folk think that the church's delivery may be brought about, by ſtirring up the enemy to daſh upon enemies, or a party to appear againſt the enemies; but all that ſhall be cut off, and then it ſhall be a ſeaſonable time, Deut. xxxii. 26. when no one is ſhut up nor left. Then ſhall he repent concerning his ſervants, it ſhall come when people are not looking to the hills and to the mountains, but to the Lord himſelf for their delivery.

5. It ſhall be ſeaſonable, becauſe the Lord will wait till the enemies put on the cope-ſtone of their iniquities; enemies muſt firſt put on the cope-ſtone of their iniquity, before he deliver. The will he fill up the cup of his enemies, which they have been making his people drink. Amos i. 2. it is often ſaid, *For three tranſgreſſions, and for four, I will not turn away the puniſhment of their iniquities;* three and four make a compleat number, although otherwiſe they have a great multitude, yet there is always one as the cope ſtone ſin of theſe people, as ver 13. this is the cope ſtone ſin of the children of Ammon, becauſe they ript up women with child of Gilead, *&c.* So the Lord will wait, till they have put on the cope ſtone ſin, which they have not yet done; and when that is done, then they have no more to do; but the Lord will come and make them as the waters of Noah, no more to overflow the earth. He is waiting to have them drop ripe, that he may cut them off with the ſickle of his juſtice.

3. This delivery ſhall be a very terrible delivery, Pſal. l. 3. *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence, a fire ſhall devour before him, and it ſhall be very tempeſtuous round about him.* It ſhall be terrible to enemies, when he fills up to them double of the cup which they have filled, when he draws his ſword againſt them, when he executes judgment without mercy, it ſhall be a terrible delivery to all peace makers with enemies. There is a great company in the land going in to make peace with enemies: But, remember this, as ye are partaking with them in their iniquity, ye ſhall be partakers with them in their judgments, ye that are coming under the ſhadow of the enemies for protection, ye ſhall fall with them when they fall. O! that men would conſider who are by theſe actings proclaiming war againſt God; it ſhall be a terrible delivery to ſuch as are upholders of the enemies; many are upholding them, to the bearing down of the work of God, and lengthning out the captivity of his church; but conſider this, theſe enemies they now uphold, as ſo many pillars ſhall fall and cruſh them. Scotland ſhall be a fat land with the blood of

compliers; with the blood of ceſs-payers, and with the blood of locality-payers: It ſhall be a fat land with the blood of indulged: He ſhall invite the beaſts of the field, and the fowls of the air to a ſacrifice. Now I ſhall tell you in what reſpect it ſhall be a terrible delivery.

1. To many it ſhall be very terrible, becauſe it ſhall want all conſolation, Zeph. i. 5. *That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and diſtreſs, a day of waſteneſs and deſolation, a day of clouds and thick darkneſs*, it ſhall be a day without light of comfort or conſolation; ſuch are the judgments theſe meet with, who are puniſhed when enemies are puniſhed; ſuch are the judgments of the enemies, and of thoſe who are in enemies camps; their cup of affliction is without conſolation; but his people's affliction is moderate chaſtiſement, whereas a cup of indignation ſhall be put in the hands of enemies.

2. It is terrible, as it ſhall diſappoint the expectation of very many. Mic. vi 15. *Thou ſhalt ſow, but thou ſhalt not reap.* People have been buſy labouring this long time, to ſhelter themſelves in a life of eaſe; but the Lord ſhall diſappoint their expectation. Enemies have been ſtudying to eſtabliſh themſelves, but the Lord ſhall diſappoint them; he will diſappoint the expectation of theſe who have been ſtudying to ſhelter themſelves under the enemies banner. There is a company in the land, who have been ſtudying to have a peaceable life of it, by going under the enemies banner, by accepting indulgencies, *&c.* What hath moved ſo many to fall into ſuch courſes, but the expectation of a peaceable life? But their expectation ſhall be miſerably diſappointed; for the very way they have made uſe of for getting peace ſhall bring trouble and deſolation; it ſhall be a way to bring his anger, vengeance and hot diſpleaſure upon them. What are they like? They are like theſe falſe prophets, who propheſied peace to them, to whom no peace belonged, building a wall with untempered mortar; but a ſtormy wind ſhall come upon the wall, and theſe who daubed it; and it ſhall be ſaid, where is the wall, and theſe who daubed it? Ezek. xiii 10, 11, 12. The time is coming when it ſhall be ſaid, Where is the indulgency and the indulged? they have been pleading in defence of the adverſary, and they have been weakning the hands of the faithful witneſſes; they have been covering the iniquity of the adverſaries and enemies, *&c.* but a ſtormy wind is coming from above, that ſhall rend it in pieces: Believe it, the Lord ſhall have them ſweeped off the face of the earth. See what is recorded, Ezek. xv. concerning the vine tree, it is ſaid to be unfit for any uſe, when it beareth no grapes; under this type, the Lord is holding forth the uſefulneſs of miniſters, when God forſakes them, and they forſake him; they are uſeful for nothing.

2. It

3. It ſhall be a terrible delivery, in this reſpect, becauſe the affliction of theſe who are enemies, and with enemies, ſhall be without moderation, Zech. i. 5. *I am ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen, that are at eaſe,* &c. Enemies, and ſuch as are in enemies camps, ſhall have affliction without moderation; he is but a little diſpleaſed with his people; but he is greatly diſpleaſed with his enemies; the chaſtiſement of his people is but very little, when compared with what he will bring upon his enemies.

4. It ſhall be terrible to them, becauſe their reſervation from this calamity, is only to caſt them into a greater, Mic. vi. 14. *Thou ſhalt take hold, but ſhalt not deliver, and that which thou delivereſt will I give to the ſword.* The compliers of this generation have uſed all ſinful means to deliver themſelves from trouble; but what are they doing by all theſe? They are reſerving themſelves to a greater affliction, albeit they may eſcape the leſſer affliction of the people of God; remember what is recorded in Amos vi. of thoſe that are at eaſe in the time of Zion's affliction, ver. 7. *They ſhall go captive with the firſt that go captive;* ſome ſhall fall by the ſword, who thought the evil day ſhould never overtake them: Believe it, they that are not in the fire of affliction this day, ſhall be caſt into a more hot furnace than this is: Such as are now at eaſe in Zion's trouble, are reſerved for a more hot furnace; it ſhall be a very terrible delivery for many: When God ſhall mount the red horſe of ſeverity, he ſhall rid to the girths in the blood of many; he ſhall ſhed the blood of enemies in a greater meaſure: Blood ſhall run down Scotland, as rivers down a ſteep place; it ſhall be a very terrible delivery; if few friends ſhall be found in Scotland then, there ſhall be as few enemies found in it; if few for God, there ſhall be as few for his enemies.

5. As for the manner of this delivery, it ſhall be very glorious, and that in ſeveral reſpects.

(1.) Becauſe his name ſhall get all the praiſe, Pſalm l. 23. *Whoſo offereth praiſe glorifieth me, and to him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.* Then men ſhall be made to ſay, *Verily there is a God to judge on the earth;* for he will bring it about in ſuch a manner, that his own hand ſhall be ſeen in it only, he ſhall be greatly glorified by it.

(2) It ſhall be glorious. becauſe he ſhall make his temple in Scotland more glorious than ever it hath been, Hag. ii. 9. *The glory of this latter houſe ſhall be greater than of the former,* &c. He ſhall caſt his church into the furnace, that he may bring forth a piece of more glorious metal, with a more noble goſpel reformation.

(3) It

(3.) It will be a glorious delivery, becauſe he will glorify and honour his people; Zeph iii. 19. *Behold, at that day, I will undo all that afflict thee, I will ſave her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out, and I will get them praiſe and fame in every land where they have been put to ſhame;* his people are now contemned and reproached, but then he will put honour upon them; yea, enemies themſelves ſhall then be made to feign obedience; but, believe it feigned obedience ſhall not be taken of their hands; we have many proofs of the danger of that already! he will make his people an honoured people; he will purchaſe to them a praiſe in the lands where they have been put to ſhame: Now, it is ſaid of Scotland, as it was of of old, concerning the church, This is Zion, whom no man ſeeketh after; but then the church of Chriſt in Scotland ſhall be no more termed forſaken and deſolate, but Hephziba and Beulah, the Lord delighteth in her.

(4.) It ſhall be a glorious delivery, becauſe then the Lord will pour out a great down-pouring of his Spirit, Zech. iii. 5. *And I ſaid, let them ſet a fair mitre upon his head; ſo they ſet a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments, and the angel of the Lord ſtood by.* The Lord was there working his work; his people was come back from captivity, and he furniſhes his prieſts with ſuitable gifts and graces, typified by the mitre and garments; ſo, when the Lord delivers his people, he will give a more abundant meaſure of his Spirit; then there ſhall be well-furniſhed miniſters, zealous and well qualified miniſters: Whatever miniſters have been, there is more powerfulneſs in goſpel-ordinances to be in this delivery; he will make our former beſt days to be forgot, Iſa. xxx. 26. "Moreover the light of the moon ſhall be as the light of "the ſun, and the light of the ſun ſhall be ſevenfold, as "the light of ſeven days; in the day that the Lord bindeth "up the breach of his people, and healeth the ſtroke of their "wound."

6. As to the manner it ſhall be a ſatisfying delivery, Hoſ. xii. 9. "I will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in "the days of the ſolemn feaſt" It ſhall be a ſatisfactory delivery, to ſatisfy them as in the days of the ſolemn feaſt; that will be a ſatisfactory in ſeveral reſpects

(1.) Becauſe he will deliver from temporal afflictions and judgments, Zeph. iii 19. *I will undo all that afflict thee:* he will deliver us from all afflictions of this kind.

(2.) Becauſe he will deliver from ſpiritual judgments and plagues; the voice that ſhall be voiced through Scotland, ſhall be, "Let us go up to the houſe of the Lord God of "Jacob." Iſaiah ii. 3. "And many people ſhall ſay, come "ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the "houſe of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways,

"and

" and we will walk in his paths, *&c.*" Alſo Mic. iv. 2. "For " all people will walk, every one in the name of his God, " and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, for " ever and ever:" They ſhall run then into the Lord, there is not ſuch falling back now, but there ſhall be a more ſpeedy running then; but theſe that ſhall ſee a returning to the Lord, ſhall be ſtrange folk: There are few that ſhall ſee it, but ye ſhall ſee and flow together to the Lord, as waters down a ſteep place each one encouraging and exhorting one another, ſaying, " Let us go ſpeedily, and pray before the Lord " I will go alſo;" Will not theſe be brave days, and a brave company in Scotland, when every man and woman ſhall take each other by the hand, ſaying, Let us go pray, and praiſe before the Lord, let us go and ſing ſongs of praiſe unto his name, I will go with you? How deſirable a day will this be? He will have a willing people in Scotland in the day of his power; inſtead of darkneſs there ſhall be light, inſtead of deadneſs there ſhall be life; inſtead of jealouſies, there ſhall be love and unity.

(3.) It ſhall be a ſatisfactory delivery; for, he ſhall make up all his people's wants and loſſes when he delivers his church, Joel ii. 25. *And I will reſtore to you the years that the locuſt hath eaten.* There is no loſs that his people endureth now, but he will make it up when he delivers them; he will reſtore their or rather his glorious privileges, whereof he is robbed now; yea, he will reſtore your own priviliges whereof ye have been robbed; but I wonder what his people will do with all that the enemies have robbed from them; it ſhall be reſtored to them in that day; ye ſhall think all your loſſes and toſſings well wared; theſe that come through to ſee the ſatisfactorineſs of this delivery, they ſhall ſay, there could not be too much wared on it, when they reflect on the blood that hath been ſhed, and upon the wanderings and hidings that have been in the land: This ſhall be the anſwer, The coſt is far ſhort of the building; this ſhall be voiced, through the land, ſo glorious ſhall be the building. Now, let me lay this home upon you in a word of uſe.

Uſe 1. Do ye believe this that hath been ſpoken? then, apply it home to yourſelves, with this word of uſe: Humble yourſelves under his afflicting hand, that he may lift you up in due time; whom ſhall he deliver? It is a humble people, ſitting upon the duſt, clothing themſelves with ſackloth and aſhes; theſe will he raiſe in that day, in him the fatherleſs findeth mercy, he will bring down the proud, but he will deliver the humble; if ye believe this, that he will deliver you, and that in ſuch a manner, humble yourſelves under the hand of God.

Uſe 2.

Uſe 2. Study to be fitted for a delivery, by being a purged and purified people: he hath caſten his people into the furnace, that they may be a holy people; labour to get yourſelves made white, your garments, hands, heart and all, made clean for him, purify and cleanſe yourſelves from the ſins for which he is contending, for which he hath caſten us in the furnace; for, if ye believe this delivery, what concord will you have with theſe abominations? Believe this the people whom he ſhall deliver ſhall be a cleanſed people, whoſe work and ſtudy it is neither to taſte, touch nor handle with theſe things, for which his anger is burning, whoſe work it is to beware to taſte of the dainty meets of the time, which are deceitful. O! make and keep clean garments and hearts. O! fly unto Chriſt and implore him for reconciliation, juſtification, and ſanctification, that ye may be clean in his ſight, and ſtudy to ſtand it out unto the end: Believe it, the delivery when it ſhall come, many ſhall be aſhamed of their ways and doings. Many ſhall be made to ſay, O! that I had continued a little longer. Dear friends, ſtudy to ſtand it out until the delivery ſhall come, be prepared with clean garments, clean hearts, and clean hands.

Uſe 3. Believe ye it? then, cry diligently unto God, and give him no reſt till he come. Iſa. lxii. 6, 7. *Ye that make mention of the name of the Lord, give him no reſt day nor night, until he eſtabliſh and make Jeruſalem a praiſe in the whole earth;* ye that believe this, we charge you, that ye fall about this work and continue earneſtly in it; for he is willing to be intreated and why will ye not intreat him? Chriſt is as one ſtanding upon the mountains, while ye are in the vallies; and he is deſiring our invitation, that he may come and crown himſelf; will ye not lay hold on his garments, and draw him back again? Will ye not take him in your arms, and bring him into the chambers of her that conceived you? Join in this work, young and old, lad and laſs: What ſay ye to this? Chriſt is ſhewing himſelf willing to deliver you, and will you not put to your hand, to bring him back again? Why will ye be among the laſt to bring the king home again? He is over good company to loſe, we cannot want him; put to your hand and bring him back again, and ſay, *O! that thou wouldſt come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy preſence.*

PREFACE.

On a FAST-DAY, at CARNTABLE, December 28th, 1686, with the CAUSES of the FAST.

The moſt part of which were the Cauſes of the firſt Faſt, which Mr JAMES RENWICK held at DARMEAD, November 23d, 1683.

After ſinging a part of the ſeventy-eighth Pſalm, he proceeded, and ſaid.

O! BUT ſin brings a people low; for in the foregoing part of this Pſalm, we may ſee, that the Lord had done great things for this people of Iſrael, even all the great things that he had done for them in Egypt, in the ſight of Pharaoh; and how he dried up the Red-ſea before them: And all the proofs of his power and goodneſs that they had ſeen and found in the wilderneſs; and in the land of Caanan how he had driven out the heathen before them, and had given them the good land: But yet, all this did not prevail with them, to make them to be thankful for his mercies, but for all this they ſinned ſtill the more, and provoked the Lord to anger, which did burn very ſore againſt them; ſo that he delivered their ſtrength into captivity, and delivered their ſtrong men over to the ſword, and left his glory in the hands of his proud enemies; ſo that their prieſts fell by the ſword, and the ark was taken, *&c.* But what need we ſearch, or trace back, to ſee what ſin hath brought them to? We may look to our own caſe this day, and ſee what ſin hath brought us to.

O! have not our ſins brought us low this day? And, have not our ſins ſet up the right hand of our enemies? And, is it not our ſins that are keeping up theſe our enemies, in their robbing, and ſpoiling, in their ſtigmatizing and impriſonments, bonds, and deaths of the Lord's choice people, ſlain and murdered by their hands, both on ſcaffolds and in the fields? I ſay the wanderings and reproaches, yea, and all that the enemies have done to the work and people of God, are all the fruit of our ſin: It is our ſin that hath brought the Lord's work ſo low, and hath made us ſo low this day; and ſo, we would deſire you all to conſider and lay it to heart, that yé may come and humble yourſelves before the Lord, for your own and the land's ſins; becauſe we thereby have provoked the Lord to manifeſt ſo much of his anger againſt us,

as is to be ſeen this day; ſo that his hand remains to be ſtretched out ſtill, that ſuch a cloud of his wrath, like a plump ſhower ready to be poured down upon us in this land, may be turned away; and ſo, I beſeech and earneſtly intreat you, that this may be your errand here this day; to come and mourn and pour out your hearts before him, by the tears of unfeigned repentance; for, it is renting the hearts, and not the garments, that he is calling for this day: And for this end, we ſhall read a paſſage in Joel ii. 15. *Blow the trumpet in Zion, ſanctify a faſt, call a ſolemn aſſembly.* Here the Lord preſſeth to this duty, when he had been threatning ſad plagues and judgments for their ſins: Here ye ſee he exhorts the prophet to blow the trumpet in Zion to ſanctify a faſt and call a ſolemn aſſembly; and if ye read from the beginning of the twelfth verſe downward in this chapter, ye will find what the Lord by the prophet is calling them unto, that they turn to him with all their hearts, with faſting, weeping and mourning; that they rend their hearts, and not their garments, and turn unto the Lord their God, *&c.* So then, ye may ſee, when judgments have been long threatned, and ſeem to approach near, what people in ſuch a condition ought to do; that it is then high time to them to gather together, and blow the trumpet, *&c.* And indeed, it had been the duty of all Scotland, to have been here at this work this day, for all have ſinned; all ranks have provoked God to anger; and that anger is gone forth againſt the land, even the whole land Oh! this is a great concerning buſineſs, a great and concerning work, that the whole land is concerned in; for all have ſinned, from the higheſt to the loweſt, miniſters, and people of all ranks; for all have ſinned. But, ah! in this the land will not concur with us this day; for it is to be feared, that it is hid from the eyes of many. But as for you, who are come here this day, ye ſhould come to confeſs and mourn over, and forſake your ſin, and to turn to the Lord from all ſin and ſinful courſes, that have provoked him to anger this day. But,

It may be, ye will ſay at leaſt ſome of you, What are the particular ſins that we ſhould humble ourſelves for? I anſwer, Indeed this is a taſk, this is a work, that far exceeds our tongues to dite, or your pens to write: O! who can ſpeak out our ſins, or the land's ſins? O! what a volume would they amount to! ah! ah! the libel of Scotland's ſins is large and broad; the public and national ſins, and the private and ſecret ſins of all ranks, who can expreſs: But there are ſome ſpecial ſins, which we ſhall hint at, which ſhould be matter of our humbling ourſelves before God, which, among many others, are the chief cauſes of his wrath, and are ſteps of our defection and falling from him and his way.

1. The

1. The firſt cauſe of the Lord's wrath, which we ſhall name as a ſtep of our church's defection, was, their clothing commiſſioners with authority to cloſe a treaty with the tyrant, Charles II. and fetching him home, when the Lord had delivered them from his yoke: And this was the ſin of Scotland, yea, even of many godly miniſters, who were left to do this; which ſome of them ſaw afterward, and went mourning to their grave for; for, the bringing him home, was the bringing home of a ſad plague to theſe lands, and is that which we have ſadly ſmarted for; becauſe, even then, he gave evidences, that he was a known enemy to God and godlineſs; and ſo it was far contrary to that ſcripture, Exod. xviii. 21. *Moreover, thou ſhalt provide out of all the people, able men ſuch as fear God, men of truth, hating covetouſneſs, and place ſuch over them,* &c. and was too like unto that ſcripture. Hoſea viii. 4 *They have ſet up kings, but not by me; they have made princes, and I knew it not;* It is true, the Lord knew it well enough by his omniſciency, but never approved of the deed.

2. The ſecond cauſe and ſtep of our lands defection, that we may name, and which we ſhould mourn for this day, was, the neglecting and hindering the purging of our armies and judicatories of men diſaffected to the work of God: It is true, there were ſome, who would have been at this; but, ah! there were many lukewarm miniſters and gentry that oppoſed this; ſo that there was no purging of the camp, of the Achans and ſcandalous perſons, yea, nor of ſuch as bad a heart malice at the cauſe of God.

3. The third cauſe and ſtep of defection, that we ſhall name, was the bringing in, by public reſolutions, into places of power and truſt, in judicatories or armies, perſons that were malignant and diſaffected to the cauſe of God; for, hereby the cauſe of Chriſt hath been much wronged; for by taking in theſe again, we took the fire into our boſom, that hath burnt us and the church almoſt to death; this was far contrary to Deut. vii 2. *And when the Lord thy God ſhall deliver them before thee, thou ſhalt ſmite them and utterly deſtroy them; thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor ſhew mercy unto them.* So ye may ſee this is our ſin; and we have found it ſadly to our coſt, ſince that time that the malignants have been brought in amongſt us; and, alas! this hath been a ſin, that hath never been rightly laid to heart, nor mourned over yet; for, albeit there be ſome amongſt us, that think ſhame to plead for theſe public reſolutions; yet the ſame ſpirit is in many of you this day, even in not a few of you that pretend to be friends to the work of God: But a purged church ſhall never be in Scotland, till that ſpirit be purged out of the land.

4. The fourth cauſe, and ſtep of defection, that is matter of mourning this day, which we ſhall name, is, the public reſolutioners, their excommunicating of colonel Strachan, that famous and godly man: How like was their practice in this, to Diotrephes, who loved to have the preheminence? 3 John, ver. 9

5 The fifth cauſe and ſtep of defection, was the ſinful compliance, that was with Cromwel's uſurpation, and tolerating of ſectaries: He brought in all ſects among us; and the ſad dregs of theſe are to this day yet growing in this land. It is true, there were ſome that proteſted againſt this at that time; but this is yet the ſin of Scotland; this was far from that charge given by the houſe of Iſrael, Deut. vii. 2, 3, 4, 5. See alſo Exod. xxxiii 16. *For wherein ſhall it be known here, that I and thy people have found grace in thy ſight? Is it not in that thou goeſt with us? So ſhall we be ſeparated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.* For, as Iſrael, in that forecited place, were expreſly commanded to cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire; ſo ought our fathers to have done with theſe: Oh! this was a more heinous ſin than many conſider; it was no leſs than a ſetting up of altars, beſides him and his altars.

6. The ſixth ſtep of defection, and heavy cauſe of mourning, was, the ſinful ſubjection of both miniſters and profeſſors, but eſpecially of miniſters, leaving their churches, at the firſt call and command of the enemy, even at the ſinful command of the tyrant; ſuch as did not comply with abjured prelacy, left their flocks to be devoured of wolves; far from, and much unlike unto that precept, that is given by Paul to church guides, Acts xx. 28. *Take heed therefore unto yourſelves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers.* As alſo far from that which miniſters have in commiſſion, 2 Tim. iv. 2. *Be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon.* When enemies have done, as Jeroboam did, that threw out the prieſts of the Lord, and made him prieſts, like the nations, of the loweſt of the people; ſo that, who ever could afford a beaſt, and could have offered, might have been a prieſt to him.

7. The ſeventh ſtep of defection, and cauſe of mourning, which I ſhall name, was, that ſinful neglect and omiſſion of giving a teſtimony, when the tyrant Charles II. cut off at one blow, the whole of our noble covenanted conſtitution of our church and ſtate, by the wicked act reſcinding the ſame; and when the covenant was broken and burnt; this was not one breach, but a real overturning of all: And, alas! where was that teſtimony which ſhould have been given, when prelacy

was

was reintroduced? Ah! we have done that, that it will be a wonder, if ever the Lord ſpare or honour any of this generation, to be witneſſes of his backcoming, to build his houſe again in theſe lands.

8. The eighth ſtep of defection, and cauſe of mourning, was, the not exhibiting a teſtimony againſt Charles II. when he arrogated that ſupremacy unto himſelf, over the church of Chriſt: Where was our teſtimony, when the crown was taken off Chriſt's head, and put upon the head of a poor creature? If our love had been as right as it ought to have been to Chriſt, and our zeal for his glory, and for the houſe of our God, what it ought to have been, before they had got this done, they would have made a road through our hearts blood. Ah! we may ſay, as the prophet Iſaiah ſaid of the king of Babylon, Iſa. xiv. 13. *For thou haſt ſaid in thine heart, I will aſcend unto heaven, I will exalt my throne above the ſtars of God.* O! when will it be ſaid by the church of Chriſt in Scotland, as in verſe 12. *How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, thou ſon of the morning!* Thou that haſt exalted thyſelf to ſtrive for ſupremacy with the Son of God! There is meikle ſaid of concealing of treaſon to poor worms of the earth; but, O! what treaſon was this that was concealed, although ſo heinouſly committed againſt the King of heaven! We care not though they call it treaſon to declare this.

9. The ninth ſtep of our defection, and cauſe of our mourning, and a part or piece of the Lord's great controverſy, and cauſe of God's wrath againſt us, is, the countenance that hath been given to that anniverſary day, ſo called, the 29th of May; and no teſtimony hath been given againſt it. It is true, the Lord honoured a party at Rutherglen, to give a teſtimony againſt this ſin; but this ſhould have been teſtified againſt at the beginning; ſo then, it is the lands ſin, even the ſinful countenancing the ſame; and the ſinful ſilence of all, both miniſters and profeſſors, made it their ſin; we never read of a good turn, at the keeping of ſuch days; the head of John the Baptiſt was taken off by Herod, on his birth-day; whence it is clear, what a dreadful generation this is, in ſetting days for ſuch ends; and obſerving them in their times and ſeaſons, is an encroachment upon the ſovereignty of God, who only hath power, and hath commanded us only to keep and obſerve ſuch times as he hath appointed in his word: And ſure, there is no precept in his word, for the keeping yearly ſuch days, for ſuch exerciſes, and for ſuch a monſter, as he was, who hath deſtroyed the work of God; and likewiſe obſerving the 14th of October, for the duke of York, an avowed papiſt; for, as I ſaid, by ſo doing, it is an incroaching upon the prerogatives of Jehovah who only hath this power, to ſet days, and command obedience thereunto; and yet, O! how

hath

hath this been complied with openly, by miniſters and profeſſors of all ranks!

10. The tenth ground and cauſe of our humiliation, which we are called to faſt and mourn over, as a ſtep of our defection, and cauſe of God's anger, is, that we did not teſtify againſt the act of Middleton's parliament, which ſet the crown of ſupremacy upon the head of that tyrant, Charles Stuart; when it had been all our duties, to have come forth and diſowned him therefore, when it was in our power, and when we were in capacity for it: And, I ſay, for the ſad neglect of not taking this opportunity to witneſs for God, it is ſadly to be feared, that few of this generation ſhall be honoured to be witneſſes to the Lord's coming back, to build the houſe of David in Scotland again. O! how ſad is it, to loſe the opportunity of duty, by neglecting to ſet about it in its ſeaſon? When ſo it falls out or comes to paſs, it is hardly ever found again. And now what is to be found? Nothing; but, inſtead thereof, all are grown blind by compliance, and the moſt part running into curates kirks, and enemies courts, and taking of ſinful oaths and bonds; and ſo therereby have overturned all that ever they did, and have debauched their conſciences, and ſo have put themſelves out of capacity to witneſs for God, againſt ſuch abominations. O! but this is a ſad ſin to be mourned for, and what the land ſhould mourn for.

11. The eleventh cauſe of our mourning this day, as our ſin, and the land's ſin, was, the ſinful ſilence of miniſters, that kept not up a teſtimony for the cauſe and work of God, when in ſuch hazard, and when ſo much called to it. Oh! what did they then, but all to their lurking holes, when they were called to have preached in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; when the poor people were left without free warning, and that when there were ſo many of them? O! where were they then to be found? It is true, the Lord honoured ſome miniſters and private Chriſtians, who witneſſed for him; but, where were the reſt? It was with them as it was with theſe, ſpoken of in this ſcripture, Judges v. 17. *Gilead abode beyond Jordan; and why did Dan remain in ſhips? Aſher continued on the ſea-ſhore, and abode in his breaches;* when ver. 18. *Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeoparded their lives unto the death, in the high places of the field.* Oh! where were they then all to be found? Ah! many of them were to be found, even in the curates kirks.

12. The Twelfth cauſe of the Lord's anger, and which is a ſtep of the land's defection, and ſo a great cauſe of mourning this day, was the ſmall encouragement that that party met with, which the Lord raiſed up in the Weſt, and honoured to appear in the open fields at Pentland, for the recovery of the

the privileges of the church; and yet, how few came to countenance and concur with them, either of miniſters or profeſſors? Ah! this is the ſin of Scotland, eſpecially of profeſſors of all ranks, and of them in Edinburgh. Ah! we fear that the blood of theſe witneſſes ſhall be charged upon many profeſſors, *Why ſhould Gilead abide beyond Jordan? Dan remained in his ſhips, and Aſher continued on the ſea-ſhore in his breaches, when Zebulun and Naphtali were jeoparding their lives unto the death, in the high places of the fields.*

13. The thirteenth cauſe that we have to mourn for, as a cauſe of the Lord's wrath againſt the land (although we ought to ſpeak with reverence of that party who renewed the covenants at Lanerk, before their appearance at Pentland) was, their taking in the tyrant's intereſt in the covenant; for, ſure we are, no covenant did bind us to take in the intereſt of its deſtroyers and ours, in the renewing and owning of it. Ah! this is a ſin, that we have to mourn for; for, ſince that time, we never ſtood before our enemies; and there hath been an unclean ſpirit amongſt us, that the Lord will have purged out of the land, ere he return to it.

14. The fourteenth cauſe to be mourned over, was, that idol of jealouſy, the indulgence, that hath been ſo countenanced; which enemies granted, on purpoſe to divide and rend the church's bowels; for this was the chief end of enemies in granting it, to divide and break the builders, and to put a difference betwixt the ſtrict preſbyterian, and the more moderate fanatic, as they themſelves termed them: And, ah! how ſad was it, that they got their intention! Alas! what matter of mourning is this, and how far hath the church of Chriſt and his truths been wronged by this deed? We looked much to the arm of fleſh, as if our ſtrength had conſiſted in the multitudes of men; and ſo the Lord brake us off our carnal confidence and expectation: And, O! how many were overcome in this ſin? O! how many miniſters preached with the enemies fetters upon them, by complying with that ſin? Again, other ſome of the miniſters would not preach near any of the indulged pariſhes; and ſome would not ſet up their tent in their ground; ſome held this as a ſin, others thought it not needful, and ſome had no will to offend them; and when the Lord raiſed up Mr Cameron, to teſtify againſt that indulgence, and other ſins of the time, ſome of the miniſters did cenſure him for his faithfulneſs, as two preſbyteries, the one at Edinburgh, the other at Sundaywell, in Dunſcore pariſh: So, one built a wall, and another daubed it with untempered mortar; but where is the wall, and the building to be ſeen at this day? But, it may be, ſome of you will ſay, What need ye tell us of that, ſeeing it is now away? But, let me tell you, the ſin of it is not yet done away; and therefore

we

we ſhould come and mourn before the Lord, that we have ſuch a deep hand in it.

15. The fifteenth cauſe of mourning this day that we have, and that we ſhould mourn for, was, the ſinful countenance that hath been given to that ſin of the indulgence, oftner than once, eſpecially by profeſſors; and, alas! how few of the land have been free of it, and even of countenancing the curates by hearing them, and even receiving the ſacraments at their hands, or from them.

16. The ſixteenth cauſe that we have to mourn for, as a ſtep of the land's ſin and defection, was, and is, that ſinful paying of the ceſs, that abominable ſin, to bear down the way and work of Chriſt: This hath been the wily and crafty way that they have taken, whereby they have advanced the kingdom of Antichriſt, and that in an avowed manner. O! tremble at this; ye that pay that ceſs, ye have need to mourn and to break off your ſins by repentance, and eſpecially that ſin; O! break it off, and leave it; for, O! what a nefarious wickedneſs is this, to employ that which God hath given you, and lay it out for them, to hire a profane enemy to baniſh Chriſt and his goſpel out of the land, and to take and root out the owners of his cauſe and truth? I remember a word, that a godly miniſter ſaid in the fields, which was this, "That "if the enemy continued to impoſe, and people yielded, to "pay theſe ten terms ceſs that was impoſed, that it ſhould "baniſh the goſpel out of Scotland; and, I trow, the goſpel was not to be found in purity, before that time was expired.

17. The ſeventeenth cauſe we have, of the Lord's wrath againſt us, and that we ought to be humbled for this day, was, the miſ-guiding of that victory at Drumclog, when the Lord had countenanced that handful there, and had begun to ſhew his ſalvation to them, by giving them ſome victory over their enemies; we did not then ſanctify the Lord of hoſts in our hearts, and among us, to humble ourſelves before the Lord, but ran greedily upon the ſpoil; and (as ſome of you may be convinced of the ſin of this thing) yet ſtood not there, but joined after this with the favourers of the indulgence; and that after, by open proclamation at Rutherglen, they had rejected the tyrant, and all the people of his practices; we did again take them into our boſom, as if we had been more loth to offend that party, than to provoke the Lord to anger againſt us, for our unſtedfaſtneſs in his cauſe. O! this is a ſin that we have this day to mourn over before the Lord; for, after this, there was no more a ſpirit found in us, to ſtand before our enemies; and ſo, this unclean ſpirit, that hath been and is amongſt us, the Lord will have purged out, ere he take delight in us.

18. The

18. The eighteenth cauſe that we have to mourn for, was, the keeping of an open door at Bothwel, and thereby receiving both friends and enemies, for fear of offending that party that owned the ſupremacy, particularly the indulged: But, ah! that word was little minded, that the Lord gave unto Iſrael, Deut. xxiii. 9. *When the hoſt goeth forth to war againſt thine enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.*

19. The nineteenth cauſe of our mourning, was, the oppoſing a day to faſt and mourn before the Lord, for their own and the land's ſins, and to intreat for the Lord's preſence amongſt them: This was done by the indulged party, they ſtopped it; alas! for the ſlighting of this: And wherefore was it? Even leſt that twig of ſupremacy, their idol of jealouſy, the indulgence had been made, and mentioned as a cauſe thereof; ah! man's credit, and man's intereſt, were more looked unto, than the credit and honour of Chriſt, whoſe cauſe we were then profeſſing to own: O! what a ſpirit was this? the Lord will have ſuch ſpirits purged out, ere he be ſeen to appear for his own work.

20. The twentieth cauſe of our mourning, was, the taking the tyrant's intereſt into the declaration at Hamilton: What had we to do with his intereſt, ſeeing he had broken covenant with God and his people? We were never bound to him, but in defence of the covenants; and ſo his breaking, and alſo burning that covenant he had ſworn, looſed us from theſe bonds; yea, even as to the moral part of the obligation; for, we are bound to fight againſt all the oppoſers of the covenants, and to defend our brethren, and to relieve them, according to our power; and ſo, we may be ſure, no covenant can bind us to fight for it, and againſt it.

21. The twenty firſt cauſe of his anger, and ſtep of defection, that we are called to mourn for, was, that ſinful capitulating with Monmouth, for ſeeking of that, which he could not give us, and that we ſhould not have fought from him: It is true, ſome have been helped to mourn for this ſin: but, O! how little is this ſeen or laid to heart by many?

22. The twenty-ſecond cauſe of the Lord's anger, that we are called to confeſs and mourn over this day, was the making uſe of that ſinful indemnity, after Bothwel; and ye may gueſs what a dreadful liberty it was, at what time it was proclaimed, for it was proclaimed that ſame day, that the blood of theſe two honoured martyrs, Mr John King, and Mr John Kid, was ſhed.

23. The twenty-third cauſe to be mourned over, was, the ſinful counſelling of the priſoners in the Grey-friars kirk-yard, to take the bond of peace, ſo called: And, O! how deep were the hands of miniſters in this eſpecially? And what was that but a binding up of their hands, that although enemies

ſhould ruin and raze the work and people of God, they ſhould never give their concurrence any more to help them?

24. The twenty fourth cauſe, that we have to mourn over, was, the meeting of miniſters at Edinburgh, where almoſt all of them voted for that new indulgence, to preach on a cautionary bond: Alas! what a breach was this for ſo many miniſters together, to vote for that ſinful liberty? I ſay, O! what a ſad breach was this, for the work and people of God? It would take more time than at preſent we can have, to expreſs what a ſin it was; and this was not done in the North, nor Highlands, where the goſpel was never had in that power, and purity, or plenty; but it was even in theſe corners, where moſt of the goſpel was enjoyed, and by many of theſe miniſters, who had formerly been honoured to carry on this work; and what was this, but a widening of the breach more, to ſee ſo many miniſters counterfeit and deal ſo untenderly with the poor church of Chriſt?

25. The twenty-fifth cauſe, whereby the Lord hath been provoked to anger againſt us, was, the general fainting that was among miniſters, after Bothwell; and that, when the Lord raiſed up Mr Cameron, and Mr Cargil, to go again to the high places of the fields, to jeopard their lives, to teſtify faithfully for his noble truths and cauſe, and againſt the ſins and defections of the time; they did not join with them, to continue at the work of God, to keep up the ſtandard of the goſpel in the open fields; and, as I ſaid before, ah, *why did Dan remain in ſhips, and Aſher continue on the ſea-ſhore in his breaches, when Zebulun and Naphtali jeoparded their lives in the high places of the fields?* And, O! how many miniſters lay by in Edinburgh and Glaſgow, and refuſed their concurrence, when the Lord honoured ſome to witneſs for him, whoſe blood was ſhed in the open places of the fields, and upon ſcaffolds?

26. The twenty-ſixth cauſe of our mourning this day, was that when miniſters were preaching the goſpel in the fields, there was a great neglect of catechiſing, and inſtructing the poor people, in the right principles of the reformed religion in our catechiſms, when the opportunity was put in their hands; ſo that the fruit is found even among profeſſors, and ſuch as countenance the work this day. Alas! this is a ſin that we are all guilty of before the Lord, even of ſinful ignorance: And, how many were ſinfully ſilent, in not declaring againſt the ſins of the time, and eſpecially of the ſinful oaths and bonds, that have been ſo ſinfully impoſed, to the debauching of the conſciences of the poor people? Ah! was this the performing of what they had in commiſſion, to ſet the trumpet to their mouth, to give a certain ſound to the people, or whole city of God? certainly this was a ſin in miniſters,

niſters, that our general aſſembly would have cenſured ſharply, and if perſiſted in, would have depoſed them for.

27. The twenty-ſeventh cauſe of the Lord's wrath againſt us, and the whole land, and ſo ought to be matter of mourning this day before the Lord, and that hath been the ſinful compliance of profeſſors, with theſe Chriſt dethroning and heaven-daring ſins, which have gone through the land. Alas! how many took the declaration, and that bond after Pentland, and the bond of regulation, and the bond in the Grey friar's kirk-yard after Bothwell? and how many took that horrid and hell-hatched teſt, and the oath of abjuration? the which, although it be little looked to, yet, whatever more might be ſaid of it, it was a ſwearing to a lie, caſting that upon our declaration, which contained no ſuch thing; beſides all that it carrieth in its boſom: And, how many went, and ſware at their ſinful courts, and bound themſelves to keep the curates kirks? and how many ſware the oath of inquiſition, that they ſhould tell all that they knew, and all that the enemies inquired at them? and many complied with the paying of the ceſs and locality, and paid ſtipends to the curates and indulged, and in paying fines to the enemies, for the doing of that which was their duty: And, what ſhall I ſay? Inſtead of giving teſtimony againſt, or reſenting the wrongs done to our Lord, there is an avowed continuing in theſe ſins. O! who can enumerate our public and perſonal land ſins this day? And even in Edinburgh, the ſinful avowed apoſtacies, and concurring with the enemy that hath been, in taking the blood of the ſaints, and that even by profeſſors, by holding aſſizes on them, and then guarding them to the ſcaffolds, they being at enemies command; regarding more their privileges than the blood of the ſaints and martyrs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

28. The twenty eight cauſe of the Lord's anger againſt the land, that we are called to mourn for, as a great ſtep of the land's defection, was, the reception of the duke of York, that avowed enemy of Chriſt and his work, that limb of Antichriſt, who, although he was procreate, and come of that race, yet he had no right to govern, being excluded by the word of God, our covenants, and laudable laws; he being a ſworn enemy to the church of Chriſt in theſe lands; and yet, with what triumph was he received, and how few moved a tongue againſt this horrid ſin? and although the Lord helped ſome to give a teſtimony againſt him, by open proclamation, yet, O! how few ſpake their mind freely of this dreadful reception? O! what the ſin of this land amounts to! we read of the Lord's threatning judgment againſt a people, Ezek. xiv. 13,——22. that, I fear, may be ſadly applied to Scotland, that though Noah, Daniel, and Job were living in this time, they ſhould by their interceſſion ſave neither ſon nor daugher, but

they only ſhould deliver their own ſouls by their righteouſneſs. Then, O! how heinous is this ſin, of not giving teſtimony againſt popery, notwithſtanding that it is coming into the land like a flood? yet there is nothing but a ſinful ſilence; no teſtimony given againſt it: It was even ſo with prelacy, when it came in, and entred into theſe lands: Where was miniſters teſtimony againſt it? and where was profeſſors teſtimony againſt it? And now, where are we this day? O! think on this, and mourn; for our hearts may meditate terror, to think on what this land may expect to meet with, if a popiſh party get their deſigns accompliſhed. O! ſirs, if we believed this, we might mourn in bitterneſs, for the ſinful ſilence that hath been by the generality, till the enemy hath entred our borders: and now, they are that length, that public maſs is ſet up and kept, in the moſt public city of our nation; and ſo it hath been brought in, piece and piece, and no teſtimony given againſt it.

29. The twenty ninth cauſe of the Lord's anger againſt us, that we are called to mourn for this day, is, the ſinful countenancing and concurring with theſe ſectaries and malignants, in Argyle's aſſociation: Hath not the Lord ſaid of ſuch, that walk to go down into Egypt, to ſtrengthen themſelves in the ſtrength of Pharaoh, and to truſt in the ſhadow of Egypt, that the ſtrength of Pharaoh ſhould be their ſhame? Iſa. xxx. 2, 3. And what was the aſſociation with theſe, but a relying and putting confidence in the arm of fleſh? And yet, how was this ſin countenanced by many miniſters and profeſſors of late? So all theſe, and many more may be cauſes of the Lord's wrath againſt us: And how are they that concurred with theſe, diſcovered this day, to be going back again to Egypt? Ah! this is a ſin, that we have this day to mourn for: and we will ſee ground for it, if we look and read the cauſes of the Lord's wrath againſt Scotland.

30. The thirtieth cauſe, that we have to mourn for, is, the ſad extravagancies that have been among both miniſters and profeſſors, on the right hand, as well as on the left; ſome who have now made a breach, and are uſurping the miniſtry of Chriſt, *&c* Ah! and alas! was there ever ſuch a ſhaking in a land, as is to be ſeen amongſt us this day?

31. The thirty-firſt cauſe that we have to mourn for this day, is this, that there hath been too much untenderneſs uſed toward theſe that went out from us; we have rather been imbittered againſt their perſons, than with a ſpirit of tenderneſs endeavouring to reclaim them, and to mourn in ſecret for their faults and ſins; we mean, their ſlippings and failings have been more the ſubject of our diſcourſe, than a matter of mourning over their ſins.

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32. The thirty-ſecond cauſe of our mourning, for which we ought to be humbled this day, is, the great profanity that the land is filled with, the ſwearing, lying, ſtealing and drunkenneſs; banning and ſwearing minch'd oaths, even among profeſſors in ſocieties; ſome having their ſhame, their haes, and their faes, and the like, they may even ſpeak them all out; O! how ſad is this among a people perſecuted for their duty, and yet ſo little exerciſed about the life of holineſs? But, in theſe, and the like, ye are even bad examples to others. O! what height of profanity is this land come to, when men cannot get living in the country, but they are wondred at, and had in ſuſpicion, if they be not profane, or looſe, and let an oath flee? But, to ſay no more of it, O! how ſad is it with a land, when the vileſt of men are in place, and when the wicked walk on every ſide, and when it is the very badge of loyalty, to be profane?

33. The thirty third cauſe, that we have to mourn for this day, is, the deep ignorance of God and of religion, and the principles thereof, that is in the land, and that even among profeſſors; really, we could not have believed this, that it was ſo groſs, till we took a trial, eſpecially when they come with children to baptize, and that even among ſuch as can read the ſcriptures.

34. The thirty-fourth cauſe that we have to mourn for this day, is, the great familiarity that many have with the enemies of God; O! remember, that this is a ſin that ye have to mourn for; yet we are not ſaying that people can altogether ſeparate from them; for then, as Paul ſays, we may go out of the world: But we mean, too familiar company-keeping with the wicked and profane; and the needleſs converſe many have with them, which ought and ſhould be avoided; for, O! how many have gotten the edge of their zeal, love and tenderneſs blunted this way, by coming too near enemies? for, although men cannot ſhun ſometimes the meeting and ſpeaking with, or eating and drinking at neceſſary occaſions with them; yet, too much company, and familiar converſe with them, is that which ye ſhould ſhun, as ye would not be defiled with the bad and ill air of their company.

35. The thirty-fifth cauſe that we have to mourn for this day, as a ground of the Lord's anger againſt us, is the ſinful differences and breakings that have been among us, even in ſocieties; alas! this is a raging ſin, and ſpeaks out much anger from the Lord. O! how dead and indifferent, are we become? yea, there are many grown ſo indifferent, as if they had never profeſſed love to his work; yea, ye are come to that of it, many of you, that ye will bring forth no arms to defend the goſpel, even you of the ſocieties; ſo that ye mind

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not the morality of the command, let be the bond of the covenants.

36. The thirty ſixth cauſe of God's anger, which may be a ground of our mourning this day, and we may take it to ourſelves, who are in ſocieties, and that is, that there is not that care and conſcience made in keeping up of our ſocieties, that ought to be in ſuch a day as this; yea, many are become ſo indifferent and careleſs, that they will not carry their Bibles about them to read on. Alas! our ſlothfulneſs in that and other things, makes us to be clothed with rags, with reference to religion, and our ſoul's caſe.

37. The thirty ſeventh cauſe, which we may take as a cauſe of the Lord's anger againſt us, is the great carnality that is ſitten down upon our ſpirits; ah! there is little or nothing in all our meetings and converſe to be ſeen or heard but carnality: This is a great plague and hinderance to ſuch a humble and tender frame of ſpirit, as this day calls for at our hands, and that we ſhould be in. O! ſtrive againſt this ſin; this is that which we ſhould wreſtle againſt, and beſtir ourſelves againſt it, for helping forward the work of the day; ay, we ſhould do all that we can, by ſtriving againſt this, to remove away his wrath.

38. The thirty eight cauſe of our mourning is, the immoderate uſe of ſleeping, eating, drinking, and apparel; all theſe may be the cauſes of our mourning, humiliation, and lamenting before the Lord, and that even when he hath been calling for other things at our hands: O! that we would win to mourn over theſe.

39. The thirty ninth cauſe that we have to mourn for this day, is, the immoderate uſe of tobacco: It is true, we are not againſt it altogether, or that it ſhould not be uſed; but there is an untimeous uſe of it, as well as immoderate uſe of it; for, ſome in the time of public worſhip cannot be brought from it, nor at other times from the exceſſive uſe of it.

40. The fortieth cauſe that we have to mourn over chiefly and that is, the ſin of ſlighting and neglecting the precious offers of the goſpel, in kirks formerly, and now of late on hill ſides. Ah! and alas! how little ground hath Chriſt gained upon many that have heard the goſpel! So, that for refuſal of him, we have made him this day to return to his place: Ah! we have ſinned him away from the place of our ſolemnities, and have made him cry out in regret, that we would not come unto him, that we might be ſaved. O! how ſad will it be in Scotland, when he comes back to count with it, and to require the fruit of a preached goſpel! Whatever cloak of excuſe ſome may pretend now, yet then no excuſe will

will be for us who have lived in Scotland, whom he hath hovered over ſo long with a preached goſpel.

41. The forty firſt cauſe that we have to mourn over, is this, that under all the profeſſion that we have had, that there hath been ſo little heart holineſs ſtudied; this in a great meaſure hath been neglected, to have the work of God promoved in our hearts, and to be conform to his image, and to have a ſuitable walk thereunto: Ah! ah! the want of this is well ſeen this day, for, if this had been more ſtudied, it would have been more ſeen in our practice and converſe one with another; and there would have been more of a practice like it ſeen this day among profeſſors. There is a word in Jeremiah, ſpoken to a formal people, that may well be applied to the moſt part of the profeſſors in this age, Jer. iv. 14. *O Jeruſalm, waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayſt be ſaved: how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* O! the mocking of God by formality that hath been in Scotland, and eſpecially on ſuch faſt-days as this; ſo that, inſtead of praying him back again to the land, we have but provoked him further to remove, and make the cloud darker and thicker; ſo that he is gone out of ſight this day, ſo that our prayers cannot paſs through unto him. O! that we could mourn all of us this day over theſe things: O! that it might pleaſe him to ſend down a ſhower of the influences of his ſpirit amongſt us, and that we might be helped to cry for his help to this his work: And, O! what need have we to look to ourſelves; for there is ſomething to be won this day, if we be ſerious with God; and there is ſomething to be loſt this day, if we be come to mock God with our formality, &c. for Satan will be here, and will be careful and buſy, to get the fruit of this day gathered up: And, O! how ſad will this be, if the guilt of this day be charged upon us, and be added to all our formal guilt, ſo that, inſtead of ſloakning the flame that is kindled againſt us, we be found but to add more fuel! O! ſirs, be intreated to ſtudy heart humility, and holineſs before God, and to get your hearts under the lively impreſſion of this day's work, and come with a reſolution to forſake all the fore-named ſins,

Such of you as have countenanced prelacy, reſolve to come out from them; and you that have payed ce[illegible] and locality to uphold his avowed enemies to ruin his work, come with a reſolution to break off your ſin of ſo doing by repentance; and you that have been carnal in your heart, and formal in your practice under a profeſſion, O! come, and ſeek the grace of ſincerity from him; and you that have been in an indifferent caſe, both as to your own particular caſe, and the work of God; O! come to him, and ſeek a Spirit from him, that ye may be concerned with both, and with all the reſt of

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the forenamed cauſes, and abounding ſins: And, if ye have not a heart to join, and concur with us, in the cauſes of this day, do not give us your countenance, unleſs that ye reſolve to abſtain from theſe defections, and to diſcountenance the practice of ſuch as avowedly go on in the ſame. O! what ſhall I ſay? Come and let us go to the Lord, to ſeek him, that he would humble us, and engage your hearts to him.

LECTURE IV.

ZECHARIAH vii. 4,——7.

4. *Then came the word of the Lord of hoſts unto me, ſaying,*
5. *Speak unto all the people of the land, and to the prieſts, ſaying, When ye faſted and mourned in the fifth and ſeventh month, even thoſe ſeventy years, did ye at all faſt unto me, even to me?*
6. *And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did ye not eat for yourſelves, and drink for yourſelves?*
7. *Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jeruſalem was inhabited, and in proſperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the ſouth of the plain?*

THERE were ſeveral faſt-days kept by the Jews: as firſt, there was one upon the occaſion of the lifting of the ſiege from the city, Jer. xxxvii. 5. *And when the Chaldeans that beſieged Jeruſalem, heard the tidings of them, they departed from Jeruſalem.* The occaſion of a ſecond faſt was when the king's houſe was broken up, and Gedaliah was ſlain, 2 Kings xxv. 25. upon which they kept that faſt for a long time after that. And the cauſe of a third faſt was, when the king of Babylon came againſt Jeruſalem: So theſe they were wont to keep among them, during the time of their ſeventy years captivity: But now, when they were in a great meaſure delivered, and were fallen to the building of the Lord's houſe, they that were remaining at Babylon ſent two men to the houſe of God, to pray before the Lord, and to enquire of the prieſts, and to pray with one another, and to propone a caſe of conſcience that they were in the dark about; and the caſe was this:

this: That ſeeing they were in a great meaſure delivered, whether they ſhould and ought to keep theſe faſts, as they had done formerly? as ye may ſee in verſe 3. and in this part of the chapter, the Lord anſwers the queſtion, *Then came the word of the Lord of hoſts unto me*, &c. which bare in it a reproof; as if he had ſaid, ye talk meikle of your faſting, (would the Lord ſay) as if ye had done ſomething of worth: But here the Lord tells them by the prophet, that when they faſted, they faſted not unto him; for, if ye had hearkned to the word of the Lord by the former prophets, ye needed not to have faſted, for ye ſhould not have had ſuch occaſion to faſt; for, if they had hearkned to the threatnings, and turned to him from their ſins, they had gotten a better of it ere now: And now we ſhall come and obſerve ſome things from the words read, and be very brief becauſe of the time, and the

1. Thing we would obſerve is this, That ſome, proponing a caſe of conſcience to be ſolved, have been the mean of inſtruction to others; as here this people were not clear in this and they ſent two men to the reſt at Jeruſalem, to pray together, and be informed anent this; and here the Lord anſwers them, and ſolves them of their doubt: So, the proponing a caſe of conſcience to miniſters, ſometimes hath been the occaſion of ſolving many others; the miniſter being helped of the Lord, by taking the occaſion to ſolve caſes, by treating on ſuch ſubjects. But,

2. We would obſerve, That people may be about ſuch a work as this, of faſting, and yet be not right in it; as here, the Lord ſays, that though they had faſted, yet ye faſted not to me, even to me; and ſo, I fear, that the Lord ſhall have that to ſay to many of us, if not all, that though we faſted yet we faſted not to him; and, O! how ſad will it be to ſee many come, and that with ſo great difficulty, and with ſo great hazard, and yet the Lord to ſay, upon ſuch a day, and upon ſuch a place, there were ſo many met together to faſt, and yet they faſted not to me, but mocked me by their ſhews of faſting? And now for clearing of this more, I ſhall let you ſee that many in their faſting, faſt not unto the Lord; and there are ſeveral ſorts, of whom it may be ſaid, that they faſt not to the Lord. And,

(1.) The firſt ſort are theſe, who faſt not when the Lord calls for it, as the Jews did, when they faſted in theſe months; and ſuch faſts as theſe are incroaching on his prerogatives, who only hath power to ſet times for his own ſervice; and ſome never ſet about this duty of faſting, but by obſerving the anniverſary days; and theſe days of faſting are ſuch as the Lord cannot away with; for as we ſaid before, it incroaches upon his prerogatives, to ſtatute and obſerve a day in the year,

upon such an account; and it is such the Lord gives this answer to, *Who required these things at your hands?* It is true, he hath called his people to call a fast and humble themselves before him, under the sight and sense of abounding sins, in a church or land; but to make a day as a statute, yearly, when it comes about, as here the Jews did, is altogether unlawful; and no such days are to be observed, except only such days as he hath appointed in his word; for he only hath power so to do.

(2) The second sort, who may fast but not unto the Lord, are these who set about the work of fasting, but not for right ends, and right causes; and they who do so, their fastings will be their plague: and when they are about it, they are seeking a plague: O! how many have been of this sort, and how many are guilty of this in Scotland, by their countenancing of such? O! how many days of fasting have been set in Scotland for giving thanks for preserving the king, or their bishops, *&c* which are but plagues? And sure, none should fast for plagues, even for such plagues as these have been.

(3.) The third sort that fasts and fasts not to the Lord, are these, who, although they be content to join in this work, and confess sin, yet they will not quit with these sins they fast for, and I fear there be many of this sort here this day; I fear there be many that will join in the causes of this day's humiliation who yet will not quit their sins which they pretend to fast for; and truly we must say this of such, we care not much for your bodily presence; therefore we would say this to you, ye must resolve, either to quit with all your sins, or else you cannot expect this to be an acceptable day to you.

(4.) The fourth sort who in their fasting fast not to the Lord, are such who are conceited because of their performances; and such may be said to fast unto themselves, as you may see in Isa. lviii. 3. *Wherefore have ye fasted, say they*, &c. So we may see, that this people were conceited of their performances; they do see matters going well with the wicked, and therefore they say, why is it that they that commit wickedness are set up, and they that tempt God are even delivered? As if they had said, What better are we of serving God, what profit is that we have kept his ordinances? for we are plagued, and enemies are delivered; so, when they see that they are so dealt with, instead of being humbled, they are ready to quarrel with God, and boast, and be conceited of their performances; such people fast unto themselves, and not to God.

(5) The fifth sort who fast, but not to the Lord, are these that are so proud and presumptuous, as if they could profit God, who think they oblige God by their performances; and alas!

alas! there are many, we fear, of this ſort here this day, and elſewhere; but ye may know how it is ſaid in Job xxii. 2. *Can a man be profitable unto God?* Away with ſuch a preſumption as this; for, wherein can we lay any obligation on God? Therefore, ſuch as come this way, faſt to themſelves, and not to the Lord.

(6.) The ſixth ſort, who in their faſting faſt not unto the Lord, are theſe that faſt from the ſenſe of their puniſhment and calamity that their ſin brings on them, and not for the ſin that brings on the calamity; and, I fear, there be many of this ſort here this day; and ſuch are theſe, in the words read unto you, which may be proven from the reduplication of the word, *When ye faſted, did ye faſt unto me, even unto me?* O! what a catalogue of ſins might we rank up, if time would allow us? And as our ſins are many, ſo our ſins are great, and the cry of them is greater than Sodom's, that reached unto heaven: O! what aggravation this is of all our ſins, to come before him in ſuch a day, to mock him? O! then, you who are come prompted up to this duty, more from the ſenſe of your calamity, than from the ſenſe of your ſin, I ſay, it is ſo offenſive to God, your coming here to faſt, that you faſt not unto God but to yourſelves.

(7.) The ſeventh ſort who in their faſting faſt not to the Lord, but to themſelves, and theſe are theſe that humble themſelves outwardly, but not inwardly in the heart: We are come all profeſſing to be humbled; but where is that brokenneſs of heart, that the Lord is calling for in this day? O! where is the frame of the day and of the work of the day, to be ſeen? O! conſider and lay it to heart, and the ſad loſs you are at, while this is wanting; look what the Lord ſays in Joel ii. 13. *And rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.* O! if we were right in heart, there would be much heart ſorrowing for ſin, that hath provoked God. But although we ſhould all weep this day, becauſe of our affliction and calamity, yet were not this a faſting unto him, but to ourſelves for you know what the Lord ſaid to that people, that howled upon their beds for corn and wine, *&c.* their mourning was only for their external calamity.

(8.) The eighth ſort that in their faſting faſt not to the Lord are theſe, who are brought from reſting on outward reformation, but not from reſting on inward ſanctification; and when that is reſted on, it is not acceptable unto God: So, my friends, I would ſay this unto you, that though you were free of all the cauſes of his wrath, that I have named unto you in the preface, yet if you be not ſeparated from this reſting upon inward ſanctification, you will not find acceptance this day with God: So then, we would expoſtulate

with you for theſe two, *viz.* 1 For outward and inward reformation. 2. For inward ſanctification, and yet to be denied to it; for all theſe muſt be had, but nothing muſt be reſted on, but only Chriſt; elſe in your coming you but faſt to yourſelves, and not to the Lord.

(9.) The ninth ſort, that in their faſting faſt not to the Lord, but to themſelves, are theſe that look not for their acceptance through Chriſt, but through themſelves. O! what are all your beſt performances, as hearing, prayer, and all your other duties? All theſe will have but a ſtink, as they come from us; ſo then, you muſt only look for acceptance through Jeſus Chriſt; for he is the altar of incenſe, that we muſt offer up all our performances upon; for it is only when offered here, that they are all made ſavoury, or to have a ſweet odour and ſmell before God.

Now, for preventing miſtakes of what we have ſaid, we would only ſay this word, That though there be ſome that cannot attain to that meaſure of humiliation, ſincerity, and brokenneſs of heart, that they would be at, yet their ſincere endeavours after this, and the deep ſenſe of the want of this, will be accepted of God through Chriſt; but, we fear ſadly, that this is the trouble or caſe of the feweſt ſort that are here. O! What ſhall I ſay unto you, that are ſet down upon your performances, of the ſeveral ſorts of duties that I have named? We are ſure, if you had been duly conſidering what a hazardous matter it is, to come before the Lord, in ſuch a work, that ye would have been afraid to come to ſet about it; it is of ſuch a great conſequence, to come rightly on ſuch a day, under ſuch a caſe as we are in this day; and it is ſad to come otherwiſe, and to have the Lord ſaying, That, in your faſting, ye faſted not unto me: O! how ſadly is it to be feared, that Satan gain the day of many, and many of you be made ſad loſers by this day's work, and that Satan ſhall go laughing away, carrying away his captives, and great ſpoil? And ſo, I charge you, as you will anſwer at the great day of the Lord, before his tribunal, that, in your coming here, ye would ſtudy to faſt unto the Lord, and not unto yourſelves: And ſo, we ſhall ſay this further, that all that reſolve to come rightly, muſt reſolve to take with ſin, and the puniſhment of it: O! how ſweet were it, to ſee all under the deep conviction of ſin, for both people and miniſters, and all of us, are guilty before the Lord; therefore all ſhould take home the conviction; and, O! how ſweet were it, if all in Scotland were deeply convinced of ſin! There are ſome that have the conviction of ſin in a general way, and have cloſed with Chriſt in a general way; but, O! there is nothing to be ſeen of that, to be particularly convinced of all ſin this day; that keeps up the difference betwixt us and that party, that refuſes to take with

with their ſin this day; and ſo, here this day we take evidence, how willing we are to join with all that will be willing to take with, confeſs, and forſake ſin; and we declare how glad we would be to have peace; but we would have it on right terms: This union, we would have it a holy union, founded on the word of God, and laudable acts, and conſtitutions of this church and ſtate; but for us to ſeek after or make oneneſs with thoſe, who are guilty of groſs defections, till they be convinced of, acknowledge, and forſake the ſame, were not right; for that were but a conſpiracy againſt the Lord; for he hath ſaid, That *there is no peace to the wicked*, Iſa. lvii. 21. and ſuch as follow crooked ways are led forth with the wicked. And ſo, that all may ſee how willing we are of peace, on the terms foreſaid, and that you may be brought off from reproaching us, we are willing for, and moſt deſirous of peace, yet in his own way; and while this may not be obtained, we may look on all our ſad breaches, as tokens and cauſes of his anger this day, and as the ſad fruit of our ſin: O! to ſee us brought to the right conviction of this, and all of us taking with the challenge, that, when we have pretended to faſt, and be humbled, we have not done it unto him (as ye ſee the Lord challenges his people here) and ſure, their was never a people more formal in their faſting, or that hath more mocked God, than hath been in Scotland, both in our fathers and in our own days. And then,

I would ſay this in the laſt place, that it is good to be at pains for reformation in your duty; it is good to go to God for counſel: So, this people were at pains, and ſent for information, and God anſwered them thus by the prophets; they got an anſwer to the queſtion they were in doubt of: Hence, we would ſay, in theſe days we now live in, that we would not conſult for our own eaſe; when duty is ſo dark in ſome caſes, it is no time to ſit down, and eat, and drink, and be ſecure, and ſatisfied with our temporal eaſe, or pampering our bodies, but only refreſhing them, in ſo far as we may be fitted for the ſervice and work that he is calling us to be about; and not to be ſurfiting ourſelves with eating and drinking, and pampering the body, but only to refreſh us, and fit us as travellers for our journey: So then, beſtir yourſelves as travellers going to the Canaan above: O! the ſaints reſt is not here; but, alas! I fear that the moſt part of us have never ſet right forward yet in this journey.

Again, in the third place, the Lord tells them, that they ſhould have heard his word, when he cried by the former prophets, when Jeruſalem was inhabited, *&c.* Whence we would obſerve,

1. That

1. That faithful miniſters ſhould be looked on as the heralds or ambaſſadors of the great king, and that all ſhould liſten and hear the Lord's word from or by them: Thus Paul was an ambaſſador of this great king, beſeeching ſinners to be reconciled to God. So here it is ſaid, that the Lord cried by the former prophets: So then, although it be the voice of man which you hear in this preached goſpel, yet it is God's commiſſion that they carry, and in refuſing to hear them, God will take it as a refuſing to hear him. And,

Laſtly, We may notice this from the words, that if people ſhould take warning, when the Lord gives it, that the judgments they meet with for not taking warning, might be prevented. So, when the Lord calls by his word, and rod, and threatnings, you ſhould hear, if you would have the thing threatned to be prevented; ſo then, you may ſee this clear in this people, if they had taken warning, they might poſſibly have prevented that calamity; for there was a large time from the threatning of this captivity, before it came on, or before they were carried into Babylon: The Lord gave a commiſſion to ſeveral of his prophets, to warn them of this before-hand; but they would not take warning; and ſo came of it; So, my friends, let me ſay this unto you, that if ye had heard our former faithful miniſters, in the day when they gave us warning freely, and told us what our ſin, in contempt of the goſpel, would do; if we had heard them, we ſhould not have had the cauſes of this day to mention; at leaſt, we ſhould have wanted a great part of them; ſo that, although there might be many cauſes, and have been many in the beſt of times, yet we ſhould not have had the occaſion to have come to ſuch a place, and upon ſuch hazard, *&c.* If we had heard them, they would not have been removed out of their kirks from us; but what need we go ſo far back? If we had heard our miniſters in the fields, and taken warning, when this day was frequently told us, that we have met with, it had not been with us as it is this day; yea, we need go no further than the words we have been on, for clearing of this truth; and ſo we ſhould all mourn before him; for as long as God's controverſy is not taken away, which he hath againſt us, the differences will never be taken away amongſt ourſelves: O! that at laſt now ye would hear the word that the Lord ſays unto you; and ſo, we ſhall leave with that word, becauſe of the want of time, *Rend your hearts, and not your garments; and turn to the Lord;* and the Lord enable you ſo to do: I ſhall ſay no more at the time, but, To him be praiſe.

SERMON

SERMON XX.

AMOS ix. 9.

For lo, I will command, and I will ſift the houſe of Iſrael among all nations, like as corn is ſifted in a ſieve, yet ſhall not the leaſt grain fall upon the earth.

DEAR friends, I would have you to remember this of our caſe, that it is ſuch, that ſcarcely ever a church was tryſted with the like; ſo that I may allude to that, Lam. i. 1, 2, 3. *How doth the city ſit ſolitary, that was full of people! How is ſhe become as a widow; ſhe that was great among the nations, and princeſs among the provinces, how is ſhe become tributary! ſhe weepeth ſore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks: Among all her lovers ſhe hath none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherouſly with her, they are become her enemies: Judah is gone into captivity, becauſe of affliction, and becauſe of great ſervitude: She dwelleth among the heathen, ſhe findeth no reſt; all her perſecutors overtook her between the ſtraits.* And likewiſe Lam. ii. 16, 17. *All thine enemies have opened their mouth againſt thee: They hiſs, and gnaſh the teeth: They ſay, we have ſwallowed her up: Certainly this is the day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it. The Lord hath done that which he hath deviſed: He hath fulfilled his word, that he hath commanded in the days of old: He hath thrown down, and hath not pitied, and he hath cauſed thine enemy to rejoice over thee; he hath ſet up the horn of thine adverſaries.* O! what ſhall I take to liken our caſe to? Are not enemies ſaying, This is the day we ſhould have had, and that we looked for? So that I may allude alſo to Lam i. 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.* And to that in Jer. viii. 15 *We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble.* Ver. 20. *The harveſt is paſt, the ſummer is ended, and we are not ſaved.* Is not this then a ſad caſe? But, I ſay, a ſuffering caſe is ay a ſad caſe.

But to come to the words, *For lo, I will command, and I will ſift the houſe of Iſrael*, &c. In the beginning of this chapter, the prophet ſees the Lord ſtanding upon the altar; and the prophet gets a commiſſion to ſmite the lintels of the door, that the poſts thereof may ſhake, and to cut them in the head; and he ſays, *I will ſlay the laſt of them with the ſword.* By cutting

ting the poſts in the head, is meant the heads, and ſtrength of the people, and their deſolation; hereby the Lord confirming them, that all the ways they took, or ſhould take, to eſcape, ſhould not prevail, but they ſhould be taken; altho' they ſhould dig down to hell, yet thence he would bring them up; and though they ſhould flee unto Carmel, yet thence he would bring them back; and though they go into captivity. yet there would he cauſe the ſword, and it would ſlay them, So, from all this, we may ſay to you, ſirs, think not to miſs the ſtroke that the Lord hath to bring upon this generation; no, no. Some may dream to be among the enemies, and yet not be known, or among ſtrangers, and ſo eſcape; but remember, and take the Lord's word for it, that you ſhall not eſcape: And it is long ſince the Lord threatned this land with judgments, and deſolating ſtrokes: And, to confirm it this tells whoſe hands they have to go through: It is he that buildeth his ſtories in the heavens; it is the Lord of hoſts that toucheth the land, and it ſhall melt. And, then, leſt they ſhould ſay, that they were a people in covenant with God; the Lord anſwers, and ſays, *Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me?* Notwithſtanding of all the privileges that I beſtowed upon you, yet, ye are even as ugly unto me as the Ethiopians; and ſuppoſe ye ſhould object and ſay, Hath not the Lord delivered us out of the land of Egypt, and brought us through the wilderneſs, and will he now deſtroy us? Alſo the Lord anſwers to that, that he had likewiſe delivered the Philiſtines from Caphtor, and the Aſſyrians from Kir; and therefore they needed not conclude, that their privileges ſhould ſave them; for he tells them; That his eyes were upon the ſinful nation, and that he was looking always, that he might deſtroy them: And, I think, that this is the language, that he is ſaying to Scotland, that is ſo bewitched with whoredom, drunkennneſs, profanity, perjury, and backſliding, that he will deſtroy them.

But there is a promiſe made to his own people, that he will not utterly deſtroy the houſe of Jacob. And then, in the text, he tells what he will do with them, that he will ſift the houſe of Iſrael among all nations; yet one grain thereof ſhall not fall to the earth; there ſhall none of them be loſt: And he tells who they were that he would ſift, they were the ſecure folk, who ſaid, That the calamity ſhould never overtake them. So then, the folk likely that the Lord will find out and count with, are theſe who have their own ſtarting holes, that they think they will flee to for ſafety: Be taken who will, they ſhall be taken, and ſhall not eſcape. But then, the iſſue is ſweet, verſe 11. *In that day will I raiſe up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and cloſe up the breaches thereof, and I will raiſe up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.*

So

So much for the connection, and now I come to the words, *I will ſift the houſe of Iſrael.* The meaning of the words is, That the Lord will command to ſift his church, as narrowly as corn is ſifted in a ſieve: And this is to be underſtood, that either the Lord ſhould ſift them among the nations; or elſe, that they ſhould be as narrowly and ſharply dealt with, as if they had been ſo uſed: This may be underſtood from this; and yet, notwithſtanding of all the hard uſage that this church ſhall meet with; yet, where there is a grain, if it be but like a grain of grace, it ſhall not be loſt: For, by the falling of ſo ſmall a grain to the earth, is meant, that it is loſt, and cannot be gathered up again: And ſo, I ſhall divide the words into theſe two heads:

1. That the Lord will narrowly ſift his people and church.

2. That one grain of grace ſhall not be loſt; not one of his people ſhall be loſt. And from the firſt head I ſhall lay down this doctrine:

DOCT. *Whatever be the ſhiftings that men may take to eſcape, and ſhift the ſieve by; yet they need not think to eſcape ſo: Whoever they be that have eſcaped this ſearch, yet they ſhall not paſs unſifted.*

And now for confirmation of this point, ye ſee what John the Baptiſt ſays, concerning Chriſt coming to his church, Matth. iii. 12. *Whoſe fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* Do ye think that a man that hath a heap of corn and chaff lying together, that he will let them ly ſo? No, no, he will not; for he will winnow and ſift it, till he get the corn and chaff parted: So alſo, the Lord will ſift hypocrites from among his people: For, as it is in Mal. iii. 3. *He ſhall ſit as a refiner, and purifier of ſilver.* He ſhall purify and purge out all the droſs of his people, Zech. xiii. 9 *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as ſilver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried.* So the Lord will purge his people. Do ye think a man that hath a heap of gold and droſs lying together, will ſuffer it to remain ſo? No, certainly; but he will bring it to the furnace, and melt and ſeparate them there.

Now, in ſpeaking to this point, there are five things that I would ſpeak to from this:

I. A word, in ſhewing ſome ſieves, that the Lord ſifts his people with.

II. What he ſifts them for.

III. What he ſifts them from.

IV. What the Lord purpoſes in the ſifting of his people.

V. Some words of uſe.

Now, as to the *firſt of theſe.*

1. The Lord ſifts his people, by the ſieve of his word, Heb. iv. 12. *For the word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* This is a ſive that the Lord oft makes uſe of in the ſifting of his people; and much of his ſifting by his word have we gotten; the Lord ſifts by his law, and by his goſpel. And now, I would poſe you, as in his ſight, in whoſe hand this ſieve is, Do you know what it is to be ſifted by the law? if not, and if ye continue ſo, as ſure as the Lord lives, he hath the ax in his hand; and there is no delivery from this hand of his, that this ſieve is in.

2. The Lord ſifts his people with the ſieve of the diſcipline of his church; and by this he ſifts out many hypocrites and hypocriſy: And although this is a thing, that the want thereof is looked but lightly on by many; but let them, or any, think of it as they will, yet this is a trying ſieve. When he had a well conſtituted church, by doctrine and church diſcipline, how terrible were we to the enemies? For, what was the thing that cauſed the malignants ſcar at, and be ſo much averſe to preſbyterial church government, but becauſe they could not endure the diſcipline of the church? For they would never have been ſo careful (at leaſt many of them) for prelacy, if it had not been this.

3. The Lord ſifts his people with the ſieve of affliction, Lev. xxvi. 15, 16. *And if ye ſhall deſpiſe my ſtatutes, or if your ſoul abhor my judgments, ſo that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant, I alſo will do this unto you, I will even appoint over you terror, conſumption, and the burning ague, that ſhall conſume the eye; and cauſe ſorrow of heart: And ye ſhall ſow your ſeed in vain, for your enemies ſhall eat it.* The Lord hath appointed all ſorts of affliction, as a ſieve to diſcover the droſs and hypocriſy of his people; and therefore, O friends! the uſe that you ſhould make of theſe your afflictions, ſickneſs, and croſſes; or whatever trouble you have, if it were but a tooth-ach, ſhould be, to make you ſearch yourſelves, and to hate all your ſin and hypocriſy: For this is God's deſign in afflicting his people, to part them from all their droſs and hypocriſy.

4. The Lord ſifts his people with the ſieve of deſertion, Pſalm xlii. 6. *O my God, my ſoul is caſt down within me.* Here he gives proof of his being intereſted in God, by calling him, *My God;* and yet he is here under a deſertion: And believe it, ſirs, deſertion will ſift ſtrongly; it will try what grips ye have of Chriſt, and of grace. And, by the way, when we ſpeak of this ſieve, do not grudge at it; grudge not at deſertion;

ſertion; for although it be not joyful or comfortable, yet it is needful, and will ſift narrowly.

5. The Lord ſifts his people with the ſieve of perſecution: And this ſieve the Lord makes ſometimes wider; and he gives enemies a permiſſion to ſift with it: Yet ſtill he keeps the ſieve in his own hand; and he hath been ſifting this long time with this ſieve, and hath been heating the furnace anew. He began firſt with a wide ſieve; and, O! but much chaff and droſs went through at the firſt: But, now he hath laid that by, and made hot the furnace anew: And, O! but the chaff be much that he hath found out, and will find out: It is much, and will be much ere all be done; for, it is now come to that, we ſay, that all that was pleaſant to the outward eye, we are robbed of it: God is now making uſe of this; and, O! but he hath ſifted out much chaff with this ſieve: In charity, it could not have been believed, that ſo much chaff ſhould have been found within ſo ſhort a time, as is diſcovered already.

6. The Lord ſifts his people by the ſieve of temptations; and this is a narrow ſieve: It is narrower than the ſieve of perſecution; but think not ſtrange that the Lord ſhould take this ſieve; for Chriſt himſelf went through this ſieve, Matth. iv. 1,——12. No doubt but this is a narrow ſieve, becauſe this ſieve of temptation is fourfold: As,

(1.) When the temptation is ſuited to the inclination; and that will try the man or woman to purpoſe: And, believe it, ye that know any thing of this, ye will find yourſelves oftner tried with this, than with any other temptation: For drunkenneſs is not ſo oft the man's temptation, that is not inclined to it, as it is to him whoſe inclination is after it.

(2.) There is another ſort of temptation which Satan ordinarily aſſaults by, and that is, when the temptation ſuits the man's neceſſity; and this Satan did to our bleſſed Lord, when he was an hungred; for then the tempter bade him command the ſtones to be made bread, Matth. iv. 3.

(3.) The third ſort of temptation is, when Satan ſuits the temptation to the creature's advantage; when Satan by the temptation ſays to the man, Do this thing, and the other thing, and ye will get the gear kept in this evil time; and if ye do otherwiſe, ye will be herried out of the door; as that, if ye go not to the kirk and court, and take the bond that is coming through, ye will not get the corn and the cattle kept. And ſo, it is not the want of light, that hath made ſo many of the profeſſors of Scotland run ſo many black roads; but only this, to get the gear kept.

(4.) And there is a fourth ſort of temptation, that is moſt prevailing, and that is, when the temptation is grounded upon the word of God, that is, when Satan brings in ſcripture,

that the temptation may get the better place; this alſo he did to our bleſſed Lord, Matth. iv. 6. *If thou be the Son of God, caſt thyſelf down: for it is written, He ſhall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up.* Yea, Satan will not miſs to cite ſcripture, for making the temptation work the ſtronger; but ſtill he will keep back that place of ſcripture that is moſt ſignificant, or elſe leave it out altogether: For he will make uſe of no more ſcripture than ſerves his turn: This he did to Chriſt, when he cited Pſal. xci. 11, 12. he left out theſe words, *To keep thee in all thy ways:* For, that was none of his ways that he adviſed him to, and ſo, no promiſe of keeping in it. O! but the devil hath been buſy to ſift with this ſieve, and he hath prevailed with many; ſo that whatever they appeared once to be, they are now found to be but chaff. If you will aſk at ſome, what makes them go and hear theſe corrupt clergy, that are profane in their practice? They will anſwer, They ſit in Moſes's ſeat, and therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do; and do not after their works, Matth. xxiii. 2, 3. And if ye ſhall aſk at ſome profeſſors, What is the reaſon that they have laid by their profeſſion, and that they do not now appear for God, and own his cauſe? They will cite that ſcripture, Amos v. 13. *Therefore the prudent ſhall keep ſilence in that time: for it is an evil time.* And if ye but ſpeak to them of the ceſs-paying, they will anſwer with that word, Matth. xxii. 21. *Rend therefore unto Ceſar the things which are Ceſar's:* Whereas, we neither have a Ceſar, nor are they in caſe to give that unto him; for they give unto him, whom they call their Ceſar, that which is God's; for they have given away their conſcience unto him.

7. The Lord ſifts his people by the ſieve of ſtumbling-blocks, and by this he ſifts the church of Scotland, as when enemies wax ſtronger and ſtronger; and, as to the outward diſpenſations of providence, the Lord ſeems to be with them: This ſtumbles many, and makes them either to queſtion the way of God, or to leave it: This made even David to ſtumble, to ſee the proſperity of the wicked, Pſal. lxxiii 3.——17. Ay, this hath been a ſtumbling-block to many, wherewith the Lord hath ſifted them. There are ſome, that he will ſet to his work, that will build a while; but when tribulation ariſeth becauſe of the goſpel, then they caſt all down again: This hath been ſeen in many, who once ſeemed to be tall cedars; ſo that their fall hath ſtumbled many. And, O! how many are there, who have quit their profeſſion, becauſe ſo many miſters and profeſſors have in this day ſtept aſide, and left the way of God! Alas! many have fallen to the ground becauſe of this, that will never riſe again: So, ye may ſee, that the Lord lets ſome fall, to be ſtumbling blocks to others; ſo that many

many break their necks upon the falls of ſome, who once appeared to be ſomething, that are now diſcovered to be but incarnate devils. Hath not this ſieve laid by many, who ſome times endeavoured to act for the Lord moſt publicly and ſolemnly? O! this hath been a ſieve, that hath ſifted Scotland many times; and we think that the Lord is ſaying, That if there were not another ſieve but this, even this, that he will thereby find out many, and make them to fall over ſtumbling-blocks.

8. The Lord ſifts his people by the ſieve of death; and this ſifts hypocrites thoroughly and finds them out; and this ſieve will try his people; yea, this ſieve will make many to change their notes and thoughts, that have been eſteemed to be ſomething, and that have flocked after the goſpel; yet this will diſcover them to be but chaff. The Lord hath appointed men and women once to die, Heb. ix. 27. So that, altho' ye ſhould eſcape all the reſt of the forenamed ſieves, yet ye ſhall not eſcape the ſieve of death.

9. The Lord will ſift us by the laſt judgment; for, at the day of judgment, there will be a full ſeparation; but I do not mean that he will ſift hypocriſy from his people then, for, they will be ſeparated from that, before the day of judgment come; and then will be the parting, betwixt the ſheep and the goats, betwixt the corn and the chaff, betwixt the gold and the droſs: Then will he gather the wheat into his barn; but the tares will be gathered and bound in bundles, and caſt into the fire: There ſhall not be one wicked perſon left among the godly, no chaff ſhall remain with the corn; then the Lord will ſift and part them cleanly. Many hypocrites, and real Chriſtians, are living together now, but they will not be long together; for the day of judgment will part them cleanly. O! then, think what ye will do, and what ye will ſay in that day. Many think little of ſaving grace now; but a dram weight of it will be found precious in that day:

II. The *ſecond* thing that I promiſed to ſpeak to, was, What it is that the Lord ſifts in his people: And,

1. He ſifts his people's profeſſion: Peter had the greateſt profeſſion of all the diſciples; ſo he got the greateſt ſifting. What do ye profeſs? If ye profeſs much, then reſolve that ye ſhall be as well tried. Do ye profeſs much zeal, faith, and love! Then reſolve, that it ſhall be as well tried and ſifted. I do not ſay this, to fear any from their profeſſion, or to think that theſe who are real in it, ſhall be dung from it; but to ſtir you up to more diligence, and to make ſure work, to build your profeſſion rightly, upon the ſure rock, Chriſt Jeſus: For I am ſure, nothing that that man meets with will ding him off his feet; but he ſhall be carried through the ſtorm. So, remember that he will ſift your profeſſion; and

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although that there have been many profeſſors of his truth, yet he hath found but few confeſſors of his name among them.

2. He will ſift the principles of his people: And, O! but this be a narrow ſieve: He will try, whether ye took up that principle that ye hold, at your foot or got it from him; ſo he will try if ye came rightly by it; and by this he will try, if ye came rightly by it; and by this he will make it out of many that they never got their principles from him; ſo, he will try, if ye came rightly by this or that principle. O! try yourſelves and ſee that ye be well principled. O! I fear, that many will be found to have taken up their principles at their feet, and that they never got them from the Lord; and ſuch ſhall be found to be unſtable as water, Reuben-like, and ſo, ſhall not excel, Gen. xlix. 4.

3. He will ſift your cloſing with Chriſt: What, have ye cloſed with Chriſt? Well then, he will diſcover this; for, he will ſift you by his word, and he will ſift you by temptations, and he will ſift you by perſecution. O! how many ſaid, by their profeſſion, within theſe eight years, that they would never quit with Chriſt and his way? and yet they have made irrecoverable apoſtacy from him. O? ſee how ye are principled, that ye may abide the trial of all theſe ſieves, and ſee how ye have cloſed with Chriſt; for this will be tried and ſifted alſo.

4. He will ſift the graces of his people, not only the reality of them but even the quantity of them, and the meaſure of them: This he did with Peter; he thought that he had grace enough, and that he would die or burn for Chriſt; ſo Chriſt ſaid that ſhould be tried, not only as the reality of it, but as to the meaſure and quantity of it. So, then, reſolve to be tried, firs, not only in the reality of your graces, but even as to the meaſure and quantity of them, and in your love zeal, and ſtedfaſtneſs. O! friends reſolve on this, that it ſhall be tried if ye can be denied to all theſe, yea, even to the reality of your graces as to truſt in him; and to look to the Lord alone for your future through-bearing: Ay, I will tell you, friends, that meaſure of grace that have born up in time by-paſt, will not do it now; that which would have borne thro' at Pentland, Bothwel, and Airs-moſs, will not do your turn now, to carry you through cleanly: We read that Peter's faith ſerved a while; but when he came upon the raging waves of the ſea, he began to ſink: So, look how ye will win through this narrow ſieve; ſtudy, not only to have grace, but to have an exceeding meaſure of grace, and that in exerciſe.

5. He will ſift the duties of his people, and find what reality is in them, Mal. iii. 14. *Ye have ſaid, It is vain to ſerve God: and,*

and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? O! this is very sad! they would have served the Lord for outward advantage; but when matters went not with them, as they would have had them, then they were discovered, that it was never out of love to him that they performed their duties: O! remember that this land was once very forward in flocking to Christ's ordinances, and in setting days apart for humiliation for sin; and so the Lord hath sifted these, and they are found not to be bell metal; and so, this day the Lord hath discovered, that your duties were never from a right principle; Your going to ordinances when ye had the gospel among you, and all your other duties, we fear there hath been much formality in them: O! then study to examine your duties, that they may not be found to have been but lip labour and formal; and try your practice whether it be conform to the rule of the word of God; whether ye took his word and Spirit to be your guide, or not: He hath sent afflictions and trials, to try you by these; but if these have not done your turn, to part you from your sin, ye shall be yet variously and better sifted, ere all be done. O! then will ye study the perfection of the thing, although ye cannot win to be absolutely and thoroughly perfect; yet, in your resolutions, so study to walk, that ye may be bell-metal: I assure, you, if ye, were rightly resolved to be thus sifted, ye would be more tender, and more zealous. Ye that are so slothful and carnal now, and so untender of his glory, remember, if ye thus continue, God will sift you, and ye shall go off at the left hand, among the chaff, that will be cast into unquenchable fire: So, remember, that he will sift your duties; therefore study to make conscience of them.

III. The *third* thing proposed to be spoken to, is this, What is it, that the Lord by his sifting sifts from his people? And,

1. The Lord sifts hypocrisy from his people; and he sifts carnal hypocrites from among his people. O! ye that are carnal hypocrites, remember, that ye must either part with your hypocrisy, and study to be real Christians; or else ye shall be cast of at the left hand into unquenchable fire; ye must quit your carnal thoughts, and your uncleanness, and hypocrisy, and whatever sin ye are lying under; or else he will cast you into the fire of indignation.

2. He will sift from his people self-seeking: What way think ye to win through, sirs? will ye quit your self seeking? O! he hath discovered many, who have been but self-seekers: O! quit this, sirs, or else he will cast you off at the left hand, and give you your portion in unquenchable fire: Remember,

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God will either have you and your ſelf-ſeeking parted; or elſe ye ſhall be caſt into the lake of fire and brimſtone.

3. He will have his people ſifted from ſelf-love: Many there are, that have been but lovers of themſelves; ſo that thereby they have let Chriſt, his cauſe, and goſpel go, to get their own things keeped: Miniſters and profeſſors are guilty of this; they have reſolved to lay all by when hazard came, and have choſen the world; but the Lord will either have them to let the world go, or elſe he will ſift them ſo that they ſhall turn chaff, and be caſt off at the left hand, into unquehchable fire.

4. He will ſift his people from their ſelf-conceit: This is the chaff that ſticks to many of his own people; but he will ſift them thoroughly, till they quit with that conceit that many of them have of themſelves, and get it put away: So, people that think much of themſelves muſt be weaned from ſuch high thoughts! O that ye would remember this; for, Chriſt will ſift you, until he have you parted from this: I wiſh ye may conſider what a conceit Peter had of himſelf, and fear, and tremble; for, ſaid he, *though all men ſhall be offended becauſe of thee, yet will I never be offended: And, tho' I ſhould die with thee, yet will I not deny thee*, Matth. xxvi. 33 35 Ay, but Peter was ſifted, till he was parted from that conceit: The Lord made him ſee his own weakneſs: Then, what ſays Chriſt to Peter, after he had denied him? Ye may obſerve, that Chriſt ſaid nothing by way of rebuke, to caſt Peter down; but, after his reſurrection, where the diſciples were all aſſembled, and Chriſt among them, then he ſays to Peter, *Simon, ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me more than theſe?* Now, Peter durſt not anſwer him with the confidence he had done before but anſwers him more calmly, *Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that I love thee*, John xxi. 15, 16. Peter was driven out of his ſelf-conceit, and ſelf confidence that he had: So, remember, that Chriſt will either have this ſelf-conceit ſifted from his people, or elſe he will caſt them off at the left hand, and give them their portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone.

5. He will have his people ſifted from their ſelf-ſlothfulneſs; they are little in duty, careleſs and formal in it: Now, this is a thing that is ſo contracted in folk, that it is not eaſy to get them parted with it; but, quit it ye muſt, or elſe he will quite caſt you off: Remember that threefold exhortation of Paul's, *Examine, try, and prove yourſelves:* Now, a threefold cord is not eaſily broken; O! then rouze up yourſelves from this ſelf-ſlothfulneſs, and beware of it; for, if Satan get you once rocked in this cradle, he will rock, and keep you, if he can aſleep ſtill. O! then, ſtudy to rouze up yourſelves to diligence; for Chriſt will either have you ſifted

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and parted from this, or elſe he will caſt you off at the left hand, and give you your portion in unquenchable fire.

6. He will have his people ſifted from their worldly mindedneſs, and love to the world, he will take his word, and trials, perſecution, and afflictions of all ſorts, and ſift his people with them for this end, that they may be parted from their worldly mindedneſs: And, O! but the Lord hath made much uſe of this ſieve for this end; and yet how few are brought to quit with all for Chriſt? And, O! how many have quite given over all that they ſeemed to have of religion, and complied with enemies to get the world keeped? Oh! it may well be called a factor to the devil; ay, it may be ſaid of the world, as it was ſaid of Saul and David, other ſins have ſlain their thouſands It is a word among the Latiniſts, That the throat kills more than the ſword; So, I will ſay it of the world, That the world kills more ſouls than the ſword doth of bodies, O! believe it that exceſſive love to the world is a rife ſin, but is little regarded: O! ſtudy to part with it, or elſe God will caſt you off at the left hand, and give your portion in that lake that burns with fire and brimſtone, where there is nothing but weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.

7. He will have his people ſifted from their preſumption; many there are, who have proud and preſumptuous thoughts of themſelves, that they have much religion and much love to God; and the Lord ſees them, and knows that they are but chaff; and by ſifting will diſcover many, who have taken up their religion at their foot, ay, and that have taken it up, ere it took them; for, they know not, nor cannot inſtruct, how they came at their religion at the firſt: but they ſoon waxed confident in it, like Peter who thought that he had more ſtrength than he had: O! remember this, ſirs, and fear, and ſtudy to keep humble; for, God will either ſift preſumption out of you, or elſe he will caſt you off at the left hand, into unquenchable fire.

8. He will have his people ſifted from their unbelief: Oh! how rife is this! Oh! there is much of this to be ſifted out of his people: But this is the chaff that he will not let ſtay with his people: O! unbelievers think upon this; the Lord will ſift you, till he diſcover you to be but chaff, and caſt you off at the left hand, and give you your portion in that lake of unquenchable fire; And as for you that are his people, remember that God will put you through many ſieves till he get you and this chaff of unbelief parted.

9. He will have his people ſifted from their truſting and putting confidence in man, or in the arm of fleſh. Alas! how many were there of us, that looked that their deliverance ſhould have come that way, even by that party that was lately

on foot with Argyle, expecting that the Lord would do great things by them? But, for my part I never thought such a thing, that our deliverance would come that way; for, the Lord broke a party at Pentland Bothwel, and Air's-moss, that there was more to have been looked for from them, and more confidence to have been put in them, than in this party; But, I will tell you, the Lord will never leave of sifting of his people, till he see them shaken out of all carnal confidence, and bring them to look to himself only for delivery; but I think that few of his people looked for a delivery directly, by these men; but thy did it indirectly, by thinking as I thought that the Lord might make use of them to break the common enemy, that so he might make way for himself; but he will have his people taken off all these, and brought to a non-plus what to do; and are not we at this already? But the Lord will have us brought more into it yet, that we may look to himself allenarly.

10 He will have his people sifted from their envying and grudging at his enemies; O! but this sin prevaileth much; it prevailed even with David; for he was even envious, and grudged to see the prosperity of the wicked; yea, was brought to think that the wicked had the best of it, and said that he thought that he had washed his hands in vain, till that he went into the sanctuary, where the Lord let him see their end. But, O! poor, things, they need not be envied in their gold, and in their gear; but rather they are to be pitied, and their case mourned over, considering the dreadful day that is abiding them, though now they enjoy their good things.

But there is a worse sort of envy, which is more dangerous, and that is, to envy grace in the Lord's people, and that is especially when they are like to outstrip us in holiness. O! beware of this sin; it is true and it cannot be denied, but that we should all stir up ourselves in diligence, who may be foremost in grace; but this is from a bad principle; but O! envy not because you cannot win up to the measure of others; but strive that ye may; for, true grace envies not to see others thriving in grace, but rejoiceth, though they should be least of all. Then, O! study to get the chaff purged out; for, God will have you parted from this, or else he will cast you off at the left hand, and give you your portion in the lake that burneth with unquenchable fire. And so, ye see that the Lord sifts hypocrily from his people, and he will sift them from their self-seeking, from their self-love, from their self-conceit, from their self-confidence, from their self-slothfulness, from their worldly-mindedness, from their presumption, from their unbelief, from putting confidence in man, and from their envy: O! there are many things that he hath to sift his people from, even from these who have grace. O! there

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will be many and much winnowing, before they win to the true grain. I come now to the

IV. Thing propoſed to be ſpoken to, which is this, What is God's deſign, end, and purpoſe in ſifting of his people? In anſwer to this, I ſay,

1. God's purpoſe in ſifting his church is, to diſcover the hypocrites; If the Lord had not taken Scotland in his hand, and ſifted it, many miniſters and profeſſors who were but hypocrites, would never have been known: Why is it, that he is ſifting his church with the ſieve of perſecution and ſtumbling-blocks, but to diſcover hypocrites and hypocriſy in his own people? and woful is the caſe of miniſters and profeſſors, who have given proof that they are but hypocrites.

2. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church is that thereby they may win to know themſelves; Peter came never to know himſelf, till he was tried; we do not know what we will prove till once we be tried; O! then ſtudy ſincerity, for ye will be tried.

3. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church, is that they may be brought thereby to know him; there are many who are very ignorant of him; I may poſe many of yourſelves in this place, what deep ignorance of God ye are under, and if it had not been for the trial and diſcovery of the deep ignorance that many are in of him, and bringing them therefrom, the Lord had not taken this ſieve in his hand.

4. God's purpoſe in ſifting his church, is that he may purge and purify away the droſs that is in them; for, why is it that man takes the ſieve in his hand, but to cleanſe, and better cleanſe, the true grain from the chaff? And why is it that the goldſmith puts the gold into the furnace to melt, but that the true gold may appear the purer? So, the Lord's end in ſifting his church is, that he may make a cleanly people for himſelf; it is for this that he is ſifting his people; O! then, ſtudy to be holy, dear friends for this is the language of all his ſieves, that his people may be holy.

5. God's purpoſe in ſifting his church is, that they may be more precious: A heap of corn is more peecious when the chaff is ſeparated from it: And, as the Lord ſaith, Zech. xiii. 9. *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as ſilver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried;* And that is, that they may be the more precious; for the goldſmith refines and purifies the metal, that it may be the more precious; and ſo it is with the church of Scotland this day; he hath caſt all into the furnace, that he may bring out the bell-metal; this will be the upſhot of all, the droſs he will conſume, and the good metal ſhall be more pure. O! my friends, the beſt days that ever Scotland ſaw, are at the back of this, but coming. There ſhall be a pure church, and a

holy people: All the miniſters that ever were in the church of Scotland have been naught, in compariſon of what they ſhall be, that the Lord ſhall give to Scotland; and they ſhall be a pure and holy people. So then, if we by faith could win to ſee that glorious building of the church of Scotland that ſhall be, it would be all our outcries, that the coſt that was ſpent upon it, was nothing in compariſon of the building, it ſhall be ſo glorious.

6. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church is, that the graces of his people may appear the more clear; the Lord hath brought on the ſieve of perſecution, and all the reſt of the ſieves, becauſe there hath been ſo much corruption that the true grace of God could not be ſeen for weeds. O! ſirs, ye know that a decayed old houſe, if their come a flood over it, it takes away the rubbiſh, and makes the ſtones of the building to appear clearer. Alſo, ye know what were Sarah's words to Abraham, *Caſt out the bond woman and her ſon, for he ſhall not be heir with my ſon Iſaac.* So, caſt out all the fruits of the bond woman, and your graces will appear the clearer.

7. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church is, that thereby he may prove his intereſt in them; ye know, if a man come by a heap of corn and chaff, if he have no intereſt in it, he will not concern himſelf with it, but if it be his own, he will take all the pains he can, in ſifting and winnowing it, till he get the corn and the chaff parted: ſo it is with Chriſt and his church, he will paſs by the faults of others, that he is not concerned with; but he will not paſs by the faults of his own people: *For, whom he loveth he chaſtiſeth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth,* Heb. xii. 6. O! it is in this that he proveth his intereſt in his people; for, becauſe there was much droſs in the kirk of Scotland, therefore he hath done what he hath done; ſo, he will take much pains in ſifting the ſame, to part the chaff from the corn, and the droſs from the metal; and ſo by this he proves his intereſt in us. Away with that ſaying of enemies, who ſay, We are not the Lord's people, becauſe he afflicts and chaſtens us ſo ſore; for, I ſay, that by his ſifting us ſo ſore, by ſo many ſieves, his care of us, and deſign to part us from our chaff and droſs, appears; and this proves us to be his people, and that he hath an intereſt in us.

8. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church is, that he thereby may give us many errands to himſelf (I do not mean only ſuch as call upon God, when trouble is upon them, but when it is removed, there is no more din of it, or their ſeeking of God, or calling upon him) but theſe that are faſt purſuing him, for peace and acquaintance with him, that by his ſifting them with theſe ſieves of affliction, *&c.* it will be like a ſpur,

to

to make them run the faſter; and ſo, it is for this end that the Lord ſifts his church and people, that they may have the more errands to himſelf, ſo that, when the creature comes with one errand to him, he will anſwer it, and give it another errand, by putting another work in his hand. And ſo, O! my friends, as the Lord is increaſing the number of his ſieves, pray the more, and be the more in all duties, and make uſe of them, as means to make you go with more errands to him.

9. God's purpoſe in ſifting of his church is, that he may make his holineſs to appear, that he is of purer eyes than he can behold iniquity; and ſo, he will purge it out of his people; otherwiſe, it would be thought that he winked at the ſins of his people, if it were not ſo, that he took ſo much pains, by ſo many ſieves for ſifting of his people.

And ſo, I ſhall come to the laſt point, that I propoſed to ſpeak to, which is, to give ſome uſes of the doctrine.

Uſe 1. Seeing that it is ſo, that God hath ſo many ſieves that he ſifts by, then reſolve not to ſit down ſecure, but reſolve on ſtrange ſufferings and ſiftings; and do not think to paſs unſifted, for if ye belong to him, he will ſift you thoroughly, till he get the chaff ſifted from you: O! then, reſolve with this, ſirs: Have ye not yet met with theſe ſieves? Indeed we think there are but few, but they have met with ſome of them, if not all of them; but he may make the ſieve narrower yet: Indeed we may reſolve to meet with as narrow a ſieve, as ever a land met with; O! reſolve in the matter, and ſee what ye will prove: If ye prove chaff, then ye will be bound in bundles, and caſt into the unquenchable fire; but if ye prove corn, ye ſhall be preſented among his people, in that day when he makes up his jewels, Mal. iii. 17.

Uſe 2. Reſolve on this, ſirs, that the Lord will ſift your principles, your practice, your love, and the meaſure of your patience, your ſtedfaſtneſs, and all the reſt we named: And O! I fear, that many ſhall be diſcovered to be but hypocrites; for, I fear there be many of you unfixed, and that the counſel of ſome ſubtle pretended friend will turn you from your ſtedfaſtneſs: O! reſolve to be ſifted, by all theſe ſieves I have named: And Oh! if ye give proof of yourſelves, that ye are profeſſors, and not confeſſors, then away to the bing of chaff with you; and if ye give proof of your principles, and not from a right end, then away to the bing of chaff with you; and if ye give proof that ye have no grace, then away to the bing of chaff with you: But if ye have a grain of grace, if it were but a grain, it ſhall not be loſt; for, although ye ſhould be drawn through hell, as Jonah was in the depths, yet ye ſhall be preſerved. O! reſolve then, to have all your prayers

and

and duties tried; for he will have all put through the ſieve; then reſolve to be tried, in-through, and out-through.

Uſe 3. Is it ſo, that ye will be ſifted? O then be intreated to quit theſe things, that God would have you ſifted from, as ſelf-love, and all the forenamed things, that come under the name of chaff; for God will continue the ſifting of his church in Scotland, until he get a remnant ſifted from theſe.

Uſe. 4. Seeing then, that the Lord hath ſo great purpoſes and gracious ends, in ſifting and winnowing his people, then take all well out of his hand, whether it be perſecutions, temptations, or ſtumbling-blocks; or all other trials: Take all well out of his hand; and if he call you to it, take up your croſs, ſit not his call, and ſtudy to take all well out of his hand; this is a proof that ye are intereſted in him; for, there is no ſurer proof that ye are intereſted in him, and that he is intereſted in you, than this, his taking pains to get you and ſin parted. O! ſtudy to be parted from the chaff, and take all trials well out of the Lord's hand, ſeeing that his purpoſes are ſo gracious therein.

And now, to him who hath all theſe ſieves in his hand, be praiſe for ever. *Amen.*

SERMON XXI.

HOSEA ix. 3.

They ſhall not dwell in the Lord's land; but Ephraim ſhall return to Egypt, and they ſhall eat unclean things in Aſſyria.

THE prophet Iſaiah, in the 59th chapter of his book, ver. 1, 2, 3. ſays, *Behold the Lord's hand is not ſhortened that it cannot ſave; neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. For, your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have ſpoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverſeneſs.* So ye ſee, that ſin is the cauſe of all miſery; it is that, that hath made the Lord lay us low this day.

The greatneſs of our ſins may be read upon the greatneſs of our judgments; for he takes no delight to afflict his people, we may ſee from Lam. iii. 33. *For he doth not afflict willingly,*

nor

nor grieve the children of men; but men ſuffer for the puniſhment of ſin. Then, what muſt our ſins be, that have provoked the Lord to lay us ſo low this day, as we are beſet on every ſide? and our enemies, and they that hate us, are they that rule over us: Indeed, our ſins cannot but have a loud cry before him; ſo that, at every ſtroke from his hand, this ſhould be our language, Wo's us, that we by our ſins ſhould put the Lord to ſuch a work, that is ſo far againſt his heart; and that he takes ſo little pleaſure in. But there is this queſtion, that ye may poſſibly aſk, What judgment is it that he inflicts for ſin, that ſpeaks out moſt of his anger? I ſay, when the Lord puniſheth ſin with ſin, that is a demonſtration of great anger, when he puniſheth with ſpiritual judgments and plagues upon the hearts of men; and this we may ſee to be the caſe of the whole land, generally; God is puniſhing their ſin with ſin, when he is giving them up to a farther degree of ſinning. But in the words we have two things:

1. The Lord puniſhing ſin with ſin. Conſider the connection in the verſes before, what is ſaid of the children of Iſrael, what their caſe was, *Thou haſt gone a whoring from thy God, thou haſt loved a reward upon every corn-floor.* Iſrael had made defection from God, and had choſen the religion that promiſed great advantage; and the Lord threatens them, that the floor and the wine-preſs ſhould not feed them, and that the new wine ſhould fail in the midſt of her. Seeing they had forſaken the way of the Lord, and were joined to idolatrous worſhip, they had ſaid, a confederacy, with the people of theſe abominations; therefore the Lord threatens, and tells them, that which they thought ſhould be their gain, ſhould turn to their loſs and diſadvantage; and it is juſt with God, to puniſh their ſin with a further degree of ſinning.

But, the ſecond threatning, is with exile; *They ſhall not dwell in the Lord's land: But Ephraim ſhall return to Egypt, and ſhall eat unclean things in Aſſyria.* They ſhall comply with idols and idolatrous worſhip. And,

A third threatning is, that they ſhould be cut ſhort of that worſhip which they had choſen; that ſacrifice that they had choſen and truſted in, ſhould be taken away; they ſhall not offer wine-offerings unto the Lord, neither ſhould they be pleaſing unto him; but their ſacrifices ſhould be unto them as the bread of mourners, and all that eat thereof ſhall be polluted: For their bread for their ſoul ſhall not come into the houſe of the Lord.

A fourth threatning is, that they ſhall not only be deprived of their ſacraments, but of their feaſts alſo: What will ye do in the day of the ſolemn feaſts of the Lord? For lo, they are gone, becauſe of deſtruction Egypt ſhall gather them up. And,

Laſtly,

Laſtly, They are threatned with this, that they ſhall die in baniſhment. So, ye ſee, the threatning is, That they ſhall be driven to Egypt, and that they ſhould be made to eat the unclean things in Aſſyria. And the doctrine that I ſhall obſerve is this,

Doct. I. *That it is a ſad calamity to a land or people, when people provoke the Lord to take away that which he had formerly conferred upon them; and when he takes away a people by exile.*

It is true, all places are alike to the people of God, while they are helped to keep his way; but it was not ſo with the children of Iſrael, for that land was given unto them for inheritance, and it was a type of the heavenly Canaan; and their being baniſhed from it was a being baniſhed from his church and family. So the doctrine is this,

Doct. II. *That it is ſad, when ſin makes the Lord to be ſo provoked, as to take away that from people, that he had formerly conferred and privileged them with.*

And, in application to our caſe, how deeply ought we to be affected and concerned, to look back to what our privileges have been? to that noble work of reformation, that our land was privileged with? To enter into covenant with God? wherein we dedicated, and gave away ourſelves to be for him, and he ſet a complete hedge about his church, and he made his poor church then terrible as an army with banners: So that we may now ſay, with ſad hearts, that all the kings of the earth would not have believed, that the enemy ſhould have entred within the bulwarks and walls of thee, O covenanted Scotland!

Take a look to what ſin hath done to us this day; ſo that we may now ſigh, and ſob out that ſad word, *Is there any ſorrow like unto our ſorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted us, in the day of his fierce anger?* The inhabitants of the church of Scotland may take up that ſad complaint this day, and may be put to it, to ſearch the cauſes, why it is ſo: Ye may read the cauſes, the paſtors are become brutiſh, light, and treacherous perſons; they have polluted the ſanctuary, and deſtroyed my vineyard; and the people have deeply corrupted themſeleves, as in the days of Gibeah: and therefore he will remember their iniquities, and will viſit their ſins.

Indeed, we need not blame enemies ſo much, for what is come upon us, as we may blame ourſelves, becauſe we have given away our pleaſant things with our own hands; and there is none of us all that can cleanſe our hands from this treſpaſs; but, believe it, miniſters have had an active and ſpecial hand in this: The paſtors are become brutiſh, they polluted the ſanctuary, and deſtroyed the Lord's vineyard; and are they not this day making themſelves ſtrong, in entering in aſſociation with malignants and ſectaries? and therefore, they ſhall

not

not profit this people at all: Therefore we may ſay, that our crown is fallen from our head. But, what is our crown, ye will ſay? Look Rev. xii. 1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the ſun, and the moon under her feet; and upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars, according to the number of the twelve apoſtles:* But now that crown is fallen in Scotland; and ſo, the ſtars that once ſhined brightly and gloriouſly in our horizon, have now loſt their beauty and light, and are become fallen ſtars. Would you know what the generality of this church is like? (do not miſtake me, for I deſire to believe that he hath a church in Britain, that is precious to him, but,) the moſt part is not like the woman, for they have the moon above their head, and the world upmoſt in their heart: But then,

The *ſecond* thing we obſerve in the words, is, That *they ſhall eat the unclean things in Aſſyria.* Now, this may be diverſe ways underſtood:

1. That they ſhall be brought to ſuch a penury and ſtraits, that they ſhall eat that which they ought not; and ſo, this was an humbling neceſſity, though not ſinful. Look the example of David, what he was brought to, and they that were with him; and what Chriſt's diſciples did, in plucking the ears of corn upon the ſabbath day; ſo it is their humbling neceſſity, though not ſinful; for he hath ſaid, That *he will have mercy, and not ſacrifice;* ſo, this ſhould be very humbling to us this day, being our ſad condition, that by our meat and drink we ſtrengthen the hands of the enemies of God; likewiſe, in all the diſturbances we get, or meet with, we are, as it were, put to the flight on the ſabbath day, if we would now be preſently aſſaulted by the enemies, and put to flee before them, which, is our duty, rather than to ſtand, when we are not in caſe for reſiſting: And ſo, it ought to be a humbling thing, that of neceſſity we are put to; and we ſhould conſtruct theſe things thus. That the reaſon why it is ſo with us, is, becauſe we have departed from God, and have forſaken his way; and this is the cauſe of all the miſery and toil that we are put to.

2. This is underſtood (which is the principle thing meant in the words) *They ſhall eat unclean things in Aſſyria:* That is to ſay, they ſhall involve themſelves in compliance with wicked tyrants and graſſators, and eat and drink with them, of things ſacrificed to idols; being made to quit the ſubſtance of religion, and ſhall worſhip the calves of Dan and Bethel; and ſo the Lord pronounceth this, that he will make them quit and give up with all forms of worſhip, ſeeing they quit with the ſubſtance of religion: And from this, I would draw this doctrine;

DOCT. III. *That the Lord is provoked often to puniſh ſin with ſin; and thus to puniſh theſe their yieldings to enemies, and complying with their ſuperſtitious worſhip:* As ye may ſee in Rom. i. 23. 28. *And changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into into an image made like to corruptible man. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient:* And ſo, in the four following verſes, ye may ſee the ſad fruits of their turning away from God: And, as the prophet hath it, in Iſa. lxvi. 3, 4. *They have choſen their own ways, and their ſoul delighteth in their abominations: I will alſo chooſe their deluſions.* And as the apoſtle Paul ſaith, in 2 Theſſ. x. 11. *Becauſe they received not the love of truth——for this cauſe God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhould believe a lie.* So, This was the Lord's puniſhing ſin with ſin; they thought to cover their ſins with their rites and ceremonies; but that would not do: for God gave them up to a farther degree, and more viſible way of ſinning.

And, in application to our caſe, I would ſay this from it, that ſuch ſhall never be honoured to witneſs faithfully for the Lord, who have quit with the moſt part of his truth already; for it is always obſerved to be the beſt way to ſtick cloſe by all his truths; for wherefore was it thus with his people, but becauſe they had forſaken the right way of the Lord? Therefore, O! remember this word, and take it with you, ſirs, whoſoever makes inward defection from the truth, yet, ere all be done, God ſhall make outward defection to follow, and at length will give them over, that they ſhall quit with all forms of worſhip, if repentance ſpeedily prevent it not in time: If once folks religion turn all to a form, he cares not for that. Remember that ſad word in Luke viii. 18. *And whoſoever hath not, from him ſhall be taken, even that which he ſeemeth to have.* And, would ye know the reaſon why ſo many comply with theſe graſſators? It is even that the Lord may manifeſt to the world, and make it evident, that they were never right nor ſound at the heart for him; and ſo, he would have them quit all forms alſo, and make them to be known to the world, what they have been, that they have been but triators to him: Hath not God evidenced this, in many that have had a profeſſion, and that have now gone and heard the teſted curates, and have renounced all their engagements, both the ſolemn oath of the covenants, that all in the land lie under, and alſo their baptiſmal vows, this day? And why is it, but becauſe they are hollow-hearted? And therefore God hath made them to ſubſcribe with their own hand in the view of the world, what they were ſtill in his ſight. O! beware of inward defection, ſirs; for, if inward love and zeal to God and his way be once loſt, I fear, leſt it come to this

this in the end with you, to quit all forms alſo. Hath it not been his way of puniſhing inward defection, with a public renouncing of all? I would exhort you all, that deſire to abide by the Lord in the day of trial, to beware of inward defection, or elſe he will make you to be diſcovered, that all the world ſhall know what you are. Now, this is your caſe: Then, it may be, ye will ſay, What ſhould be our work now? There are five things, that I would recommend to you, to be your work this day: And,

1. Search and try your hearts, and your ways, and turn again unto the Lord. We ought to trace back our ways, and mark, from the firſt ſtep of our defection and turning from God; for, it is to ſuch as ſearch their hearts, and try their ways, and turn again to the Lord, that the Lord will give a right to this promiſe made to Iſrael, that they ſhall return, and ſeek the Lord their God, and David their king, which is principally meant of Chriſt, Hoſ. iii 5. As the children of Iſrael were to trace their ſteps, back to the firſt ſtep of their defection, which the Lord was contending with them for, which was to the time that Jeroboam ſet up the calves in Dan and Bethel; ſo we ſhould begin at the firſt ſtep of our defection, and a ſlighting of a goſpel invitation; and this is implied againſt falling away; and they have a promiſe, to return with their whole heart, with weeping, mourning, faſting, and ſupplication; which was a good evidence of repentance, and of a people's returning to God, and God's turning to them.

2. This muſt be our work, a deep humiliation for ſin, a deep ſenſe of the greatneſs of our ſin, whereby we have provoked the Lord, which may be read upon the greatneſs of our judgments. What doth this call for! It requires of us to go ſoftly, and to be clothed with ſackcloth, and to lie in the duſt, and to be humbled inwardly in heart, and outwardly in our converſation, and to be more weighted with the ſenſe of our ſin, than with the ſenſe of our calamity: But, ſee that ye be not more humbled with the ſenſe of your calamity than with the ſenſe of your ſin, that has brought on the calamity; for, if this be your caſe, (by the way) your grief that you have will ſend you but a black gate; ſo it was with Ephraim, when he ſaw his wound, he returned to king Jareb, and joined with him: So, many ſee their wound, now and then, and yet run into the enemies, and comply with them, and pay fines to them; and that is the way of many that they take to heal their wounds; but it was not ſo with Iſrael, when rightly humbled; for then they would no more ſay to idols, ye are our gods; neither would they flee to Aſhur to ſave them, neither would they ride upon horſes; but they would flee to the Lord that had wounded, that he might heal; ſo, if we had the deep ſenſe of our ſin, he would not

ſee ſo many running to enemies, making peace with them, and ſo provoking the Lord to anger; but we would run to himſelf, that hath wounded us, that he may heal us again.

3. This ought to be your work, a chearful ſubmiſſion to all the Lord's chaſtiſings; as it is in Micah vii. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* Now, what is your work ſirs? Ye that are hardly put to it, and caſt out of houſes and harboury, this word is ſweet to ſeveral of you; get a humble ſubmiſſion to what the Lord hath done to you, and a right ſight and ſenſe of ſin, and this will be an antidote to you, to overcome all your diſcouragements, and then your language will be, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.*

4. This muſt be your work, a giving of yourſelves over to the Lord, fully and freely, and to be content to wait on him, and ſtudy to keep his way; and ſay with the prophet, *And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and will look for him,* Iſa. viii. 17. *Until he plead my cauſe, and execute judgment for me,* Mic. vii. 9. Ye muſt be content to put a blank in his hand, to chaſtiſe as he pleaſeth.

5. Let this be your work, that every new declaration of the Lord's wrath be a new mean to put you more to your duty, are enemies reins let looſe upon the people of God, to run and ride over them as it is this day? All this ſhould ſpur you to your duty, and put you to a new ſearching out of ſin, which is the cauſe of all this. Now, becauſe this is our caſe, that we are brought to eat the unclean things in Aſſyria, in anſwer to all that I have ſaid, What is the report that ye will give this night? What are ye reſolved to do? Will ye give me ground to ſay, that your reſolution is that in Hoſ. vi. 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up* - May I ſay this of you, ſirs? Now, when we have provoked him, what will ye anſwer, ſirs? Sure I am, we ſhould come to him with bluſhing of face, and take with our ſin, now, when he is waiting, and deſiring us to be reconciled to him. O! lay down your arms of ſin, and fight no more againſt him; but if ye will not, and if ye boaſt when ye put on your armour, ye ſhall not boaſt when ye put it off. Remember who it is that invites you this night: It is he that hath a love of delight, yea, all delight is in him; and he is calling you, as in Cant. iv. 8. *Come with me from Lebanon, my ſpouſe, with me from Lebanon.* It is himſelf that is inviting you; it is him that treadeth in the wine-fat, with his garments red, dyed with blood. O! come and yield to him, and let this night make joy in heaven. Ye know what the Lord ſaid himſelf, that there is meikle joy in heaven at the converſion of one ſoul. What, will ye refuſe him, when he is calling you back again, crying,

O back-

O backſliding children! will ye return and I will heal your backſlidings, why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael? O let us come, when he is ſtanding upon mount Zion, and holding out the golden ſceptre of his free grace unto us: And, will ye not touch it, ſirs, and make peace with him? He is crying, *Let him that heareth come: and him that thirſteth, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* Now to him that can open, and none can ſhut, and ſhut, and none can open, we deſire to give praiſe.

SERMON XXII.

ZECHARIAH ix. 9.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem: Behold thy king cometh unto thee; he is juſt, and having ſalvation; lowly, and riding upon an aſs, and upon a colt, the foal of an aſs.

HERE ye may ſee Chriſt in a very low condition, riding upon an aſs, yet for all that he was a King.

I. He is called juſt and that in theſe reſpects:

1. He is juſt towards his people; he can nor will do them no wrong; for all the troubles and afflictions that they meet with while here, they will be made to ſay, that he is juſt in ſo doing, as it was for their good that they were ſo dealt with.

2. He is juſt towards his enemies, in their condemnation; they will be made to ſubſcribe to the juſtice of it. O! how will this glorious attribute of his juſtice ſhine towards his enemies, when he ariſeth in this land to plead his cauſe, when he cloatheth himſelf with zeal as with a cloak, and with the garments of vengeance, when it is ſaid, *Who is he that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozra?* Iſa. lxiii. 1. O! then, what will his enemies do?

3. He is juſt, that is, he hath juſtification and righteouſneſs to give his people; he hath ſanctification to give them; yea, he hath all things to give them. O! then will ye come away and embrace him; lay hold upon him for juſtification and ſanctification; if Chriſt is yours, all things are yours; then let nothing hinder you from coming to him. But ſome will

will ſay, O! I am a great ſinner, and how can I come to Chriſt? O! let not that hinder you but rather further you to come; ye ſtand in the greater need of him, that ye are a great ſinner; *he is juſt*, that may anſwer all your objections.

II. *And he hath ſalvation.* that may anſwer other of your objections: Therefore come and embrace him. He hath not only ſalvation to give you, from hell and wrath to come; yea, from all our enemies, inward and outward.

III. *He is lowly.* And may not this anſwer all your objections, *he is lowly?* He is great, yet condeſcending; he is a King, yet he is lowly. O! may we not wonder at his lowlineſs, and ſhould not this confederacy engage us to him? If it be aſked, What is the beſt way to labour to mortify ſin? *Anſw.* Meditate much upon the condeſcendency of Chriſt to poor loſt ſinners; that will make the ſoul to hate the ſin, that was lovely to him before; and will make the ſoul to be drawn out in love after Chriſt, loving holineſs, and panting to be like him. It is ſaid, there were five men met to conſult what was the beſt way to make a ſoul labour to mortify ſin: The firſt ſaid, to think much on death. The ſecond ſaid, to think much on judgment: The third ſaid, to think much on heaven: The fourth ſaid, to think much on hell: The fifth, which was the beſt, ſaid, to think much on the condeſcendency of Chriſt. O! therefore, let us meditate much upon his condeſcendency, that we may be drawn out to love him, and hate ſin; let us take him for our king, O! the moſt part of the land hath dethroned him, taken his crown and princely robes, and royal prerogatives from him; let us not do ſo, but take him for our king, and ſet our crowns upon his head. All they who take him for theirs, and embrace him ſet their crowns upon his head, Cant. iii 11. *Go forth, O daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him.* That is, go forth, and behold King Chriſt, with the crown wherewith his people crowned him.

Lowly and riding upon an aſs. This holds forth two things.

1. He rode thus that he might be near the ground, the aſs being of a low ſtature, that he might have the more conveniency to ſpeak to his people as he paſſed by.

2. That he might have the more time to ſpeak to them, the aſs being of a ſlow motion; both holding forth his wonderful condeſcendency, and how, he can work glorious works by ſmall means, and in ſlow motion to our uptaking. O! what glorious works, yea, works of wonders, he hath wrought in Scotland, by weak and ſmall means? carrying on the ſame ſlowly and lently to our apprehenſions, yet wiſely and gloriouſly, for his own holy ends.

OBSERVE,

OBSERVE, *That the very hopes of Chriſt's coming to a church and people, ſhould make them rejoice and ſhout for joy.*

The church here is bidden rejoice, and ſhout becauſe Chriſt was coming; which was long before he came actually in the fleſh; kings and prophets rejoiced at this, that Chriſt was coming; Abraham ſaw his day, and was glad: May not the faith and hope of this, that Chriſt is coming back again unto Scotland, make his people to rejoice; yea, they may and ſhould rejoice, and be glad and ſhout for joy. And there are three marks and evidences of Chriſt's coming again to this land.

1. Scotland is a married land; it is Chriſt's by covenant, having given away itſelf wholly to him, then do not think that he will quit the ſame.

2. He hath always kept up a remnant, a party for him to avouch that marriage relation, to avow openly before the world, that they are his; and to teſtify and witneſs againſt all the wrongs and indignities done againſt him, by teſtimonies, declarations and proteſtations, and otherwiſe.

3. He hath honoured ſeveral of his ſaints and ſervants, to ſeal their teſtimonies with their blood; he hath accepted of a ſacrifice at our hands; and may we not then ſay, as the woman ſaid, Judges xiii, 23. *If the Lord were pleaſed to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering, and a meat offering at our hands.* O! then let us rejoice in the faith of it, that Chriſt is coming back again to Scotland.

And it may be aſked, What will he do when he comes?

Anſw. 1. He will overturn all theſe overturners, who have ruined his work and intereſt; he will overturn and ruin their work, which they have been building upon the ruins of his work, *He will overturn, overturn, overturn, and he ſhall come, whoſe right it is, and it ſhall be given him.*

2. When he comes, the work of many ſhall be turned upſide down; many have been ſettled on their lees, making lies their refuge, building walls, and daubing them with untempered mortar, carrying on defection and pleading ſtrongly for the ſame; but, in that day, they ſhall all be thrown down; all their defenced cities and high towers which they have been making, ſhall then be brought to the ground; their pleading much for ſin and deſolation ſhall then be ſeen to have been but folly and madneſs.

3. He is coming to Scotland, to build up his houſe and ſanctuary in this land; he hath taken the hedge of the government and diſcipline from his houſe, that, when he comes, he may make the ſame more ſure. There have been great and glorious days of the goſpel in this land; but they have been but ſmall in compariſon of what ſhall be.

PREFACE

PREFACE.

THERE is this queſtion that I would aſk at you, that are coming here this night, What think ye of the language of this diſpenſation, that the enemies of the kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt are increaſing their cruelty, and their reins let looſe in a greater meaſure than ever, to get their wicked and malicious ends accompliſhed? Have ye not been aſking, What can be the language of this diſpenſation which is ſo obſervable in our day? I will tell you of two languages that it ſpeaks forth:

1. It ſpeaks forth this, that they are nearer the end of their courſe: the faſter they are permitted to run, they are the nearer the end of their journey; and the meaſure of their cup is faſt filling; and, till every drop be put into it, that the Lord hath decreed, we need not expect the Lord's gracious returning for the delivery of his church; and this manifeſts that the Lord is haſtening on in his way: Think not this ſtrange to ſee the night darker, and the cloud thicker, ſeeing it is uſual, before the breaking of the day, to have the darkeſt hour in all the night. So likewiſe, it is uſual to his church, to be exerciſed with the ſharpeſt ſtorms of affliction, before the Lord return to comfort her.

2. The diſpenſation ſpeaks out this, that it ought and ſhould be very humbling to us, that the diſpenſations of this holy God have not had the right effect upon us: He hath delivered his houſe in poſſeſſion, to the hand of his enemies, and hath made people to be more tried by their hands; and yet this hath not done our turn, in order to our humblings; and therefore neceſſity ſays, the rod muſt be continued till we be brought to the humbling ſenſe of our ſins: So, I would forewarn you to expect ſadder rods yet from his hand, ſince what we have met with hath not humbled us in his ſight. But, for encouragement, we hope it ſhall put on the cope-ſtone upon the building of the enemies, that they have been carrying on, and it ſhall be ſeen that he ſhall counter-work all their policy and devices. O! ſeek preparation for this day, that we may be kept through the ſad ſtorm; for they will be well fixed that ſhall win through. Now, what is your work and exerciſe for preparation for that day, that ye may evite his wrath and diſpleaſure that is to go forth againſt us. O! it is ſad, to ſee us ſo little concerned, and ſo little preparing for this day, when the enemies cup ſeem to be ſo near full, that we are ſo little about our duty, which we ought to lay to heart,

heart and mourn over, leſt we be ſtanding in the way, and ſo marr the work in his hand: But the Lord can eaſily bring a day, that will bring a diſpoſition, and a frame, that his work ſhall not be ſtopped. Otherwiſe, if it were not ſo, in the term-day of enemies ſhould be very long: If it were in our diſpoſition and frame, it would ſtay long; but this ſhould be very humbling to us, that we ſhould be under ſo great ſecurity and deadneſs, as the fruit of all the kindneſs of God, that he hath beſtowed upon us in the wilderneſs; ſeeing the Lord hath ſhewed us ſo much kindneſs, near to theſe twenty years in the wilderneſs, when we had the goſpel in the power and fulneſs thereof, frequently, and duely, but where is all the fruit and improvement of ſuch a diſpenſation? We have been juſt like the children of Iſrael when in the wilderneſs, they loathed the mana, and luſted for fleſh; for we were fed with mana, and with angels food; but we loathed the honey-comb, and luſted for an earthly kingdom, and the Lord hath deprived us of both: We gave the world much room in our hearts, and therefore the Lord is threatning to ſtrip us naked of that, for our ſlighting of him in the goſpel. O! but this be ſad, to conſider the bad fruits and unkindneſs, which the Lord hath met with from us; and may not this be notourly obſerved in all the places of Scotland, where moſt of the goſpel hath been preached, that they are fartheſt degenerate, and look leaſt like it this day? This ſpeaks out no leſs than the deſolation, of theſe places, that, ſpare the Lord whom he will, they ſhall not eſcape unpuniſhed; And, is not this the caſe of many pariſhes, eſpecially in this place? So that they need not expect little ſparing, when God ſhall ſmite with the ſword of his juſtice, which is to be drawn.

Now, there is this queſtion that I would aſk at you? What is your errand here this night in coming together? It is ſadly to be feared, that there are many here that cannot tell their errand; and ye that have little thought on it, ſeek, that ye may come to ſeek the Lord, and get acquaintance with him, and that ye may get ſomething from his hand; for ye have the ſwellings of Jordan to go through. There are ſome here that likely ſhall never have the ſame opportunity again: O! then be intreated to look to him with greedy eyes, *viz.* with hungering hearts, for his bowels are tender; and he hath promiſed that the hungry ſhall get a fill of him. But, poſſibly, ye will aſk this queſtion at me, What are ye ſeeking here, but that ye may obſerve the Lord's hand the more? We will tell you your errand, (for we are in a ſequeſtrate ſtate preſent) it is, to wait upon the Lord, for a manifeſtation of his mercy, or his judgment. But, believe this for your encouragment, that if he ſhall be tryſted with a manifeſtation of his judgment, yet it ſhall be in mercy. But, poſſibly, ſome

of you will ſay, And what is the meaning of that? Therefore we tell you, ere we came here we were kept in a ſequeſtrate caſe; ſo that we could get little or nothing from his hand: And now, if it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to give us a word to ſpeak to you, he will be the more ſeen in it. Therefore let us go to him by faith, and intreat for his favour and preſence to be with us.

SERMON XXIII.

EPHESIANS v. 15, 16.

See that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe: redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil.

AMOS ſaith, *You only have I known, of all the families of the earth; therefore will I puniſh you for all your iniquities*, Amos iii. 1. A people that God ſhews moſt of his kindneſs unto, and confers moſt priviliges upon, he will paſs by feweſt faults in that people: I may ſay from this, that Scotland was known in a ſingular manner, above many nations and kingdoms in the world; and ſo may reſolve to reckon for the leaſt fault or ſlip that we have made in deborading from God: And indeed, we read of no church that hath been perſecuted as the church of Scotland hath been, and is this day: For, if ever there was a pack of locuſts aſcended out of the bottomleſs pit, to perſecute the church of Chriſt, we are ſure that this crew was a part of them, who are our perſecutors this day. But think not this ſtrange, brethren: for, he hath known Scotland in a ſingular manner, and ſo will not paſs by the faults of Scotland, that he will paſs by in others. O! if ye would conſider the rich privileges, that we in this church have been privileged with, ye would be quiet and far from quarrelling with God, for what he is bringing in our ways as the fruits of our doings, for our departings from him; for, where God manifeſts moſt of his kindneſs, there is his jealouſy moſt over that people; and he takes narrower inſpection of them, than of many others: Beſide, they look upon ſin with the wrong end of the proſpect, that look otherwiſe; and that makes the ſin to ſeem to be both far

off

off and ſmall: But, O! if ye would conſider the aggravation of Scotland's ſins; and then ye will not think it ſtrange becauſe of the fiery trial of the hot furnace that he hath put us in; and ſo it is no wonder that this be an evil and bitter day, becauſe it is the day that his anger is burning as a fire againſt us: There are many indeed, who have this as their out-cry, that it is an evil day; but there is none crying out becauſe of ſin that hath made it to be ſo.

But, to come to the words from the connection, verſe 14. the apoſtle was inviting two ſorts of folk to awake, with that promiſe, that Chriſt ſhould give them light and life; and, in the words that I have read, we are taught to walk circumſpectly, *viz.* by redeeming the time; and this direction he inforceth with this argument, becauſe the *days are evil.* Now, there is no difficulty in the words; therefore I ſhall proceed, and lay down this firſt doctrine.

DOCT. *That loſing of time, and ſlipping of opportunities, when God puts them into our hands, brings on ſad days on a people.*

This is preſuppoſed in the words; becauſe, redeeming the time brings good days to a church and people: So, neglecting time, and the opportunities of time, brings on ſad days to a church and people, by judgments and ſtrokes; as in Numbers, thirteen chapter; there it is confirmed: The children of Iſrael ſent twelve men to view the land of Canaan, and ten of them brought an ill report of the good land, and ſaid, it was not worth the fighting for: There was an opportunity then put in their hand to go and cut of the heathen that dwelt therein; but they believed the lying ſpies, more than the true ones; and ſo the Lord made them to wander forty years in the wilderneſs, for the forty days that the ſpies were a viewing the land, until that generation was waſted. Ye will find this further confirmed, in the 2d chapter of Judges; that the tribes of Iſrael ſhould have driven out the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and not ſuffered any of them to have remained among them; but becauſe they loſt the opportunity at firſt, they never got it done afterward; but they became thorns in their ſides, and their God was a ſnare unto them ver 3. It is alſo clear in the prophecy of Jonah: Jonah got a commiſſion from the Lord to preach to Nineveh; but he ſlipped the opportunity, and fled from his duty; and therefore he got a bed made by God, in the belly of a whale, that he never thought to win out again: So, theſe inſtances make the point clear, that ſlipping of opportunities, when put in our hand, brings on ſad days: And I may prove this in application to our caſe, that the loſing of time, and ſlighting of opportunities, has brought on ſad days on this church; and this I ſhall ſhew, in ſome few (among many) inſtances.

1. The Lord was pleaſed to viſit this land, with a powerful goſpel, preached in purity; and frequently much of God's power accompanied his ordinances; then there was a noble opportunity, for ſinners to come to Chriſt: Chriſt delighted then to ſhew his face through the kirks of Scotland; but how few took hold of the opportunity and embraced him? and therefore the loſing of that opportunity made Chriſt to withdraw his preſence; that the power and the luſtre of the word preached was much loſt; and therefore became a dead and killing letter; and this provoked the Lord to forſake his houſe, and to give the dearly beloved of his ſoul into the hands of her enemies.

2. The Lord was graciouſly pleaſed to make an offer of himſelf, and to ſhew himſelf in the fields, and in the mountains of Scotland, when he brought his church to the wilderneſs; and there he offered himſelf in his excellency and perfection; but the loſing of the opportunity of cloſing with Chriſt, when he was ſerious, in inviting and beſeeching ſinners to be reconciled unto him, has brought on theſe evils: (1.) It hath brought on that ſad and great evil, to deprive us of the preached goſpel O! would it have been thought or believed, within theſe ten years, that the ſtandard of the goſpel was ſet up, in moſt of all the corners in Scotland! could it have been believed then, I ſay, that this day Scotland ſhould have been without a witneſs for Chriſt, to witneſs faithfully for him, in the keeping up of his ſtandard? And this in a ſpecial manner hath provoked the Lord, to give men up to ſeek their own things, and ſo eaſily to quit with his concernments. (2.) It hath brought on this evil, that thereby God hath been provoked to deny his grace, to the moſt part of the hearers of the goſpel. A noble opportunity we had, where Chriſt might have been received in all the corners of the land; but now, the deſpiſing and ſlipping of the opportunity to cloſe with Chriſt, hath provoked the Lord to deny the people ſore hearts for the want of the goſpel: There have been few ſore hearts in Scotland for the want of Chriſt, and the want of the goſpel: Some ſore hearts there have been, and not a few, we fear, for the loſs of their cattle, or their crops in an ill year: But few, alas! have there been, for the loſs of the goſpel: So, the deſpiſing of the goſpel hath provoked God to deny a ſpirit to lament after him, and to deny grace to receive Chriſt: So, that, now when we make offer of Chriſt to you, it is not taken off our hand: It is looked on as a tale, that ye may hear of, and talk of daily; ſo that the word hath no more impreſſion on the hearers of the goſpel, than on a ſtone; and this is the ſad fruit of deſpiſing and undervaluing this rich offer, of a powerful preached goſpel, when we had it in Scotland.

3. The

3. The Lord brought us to a clear ſight of our duty, in the year 1648, and 1649. he let us then ſee how to ſtate the quarrel with the enemies; but the opportunity was ſlighted, when put in our hands, to have kept out malignants, when the Lord did caſt them out before us, and gave it in our hand, and gave us power to keep us where the light of his word and ſpirit had ſet us: So, our provocation, by taking in theſe, that were known to have a heart malice and prejudice at the cauſe of Chriſt, hath provoked the Lord to make us feel the weight of their heavy hand ſince: So that inſtead of light there is nothing but darkneſs; ſo that the moſt part have never ſeen the ground rightly ſtated ſince; although the Lord was pleaſed to cauſe ſome keep up the remembrance of his name unto this day; yet it hath brought us to that, that many know not what to hold by, as duty; and what to forſake, as ſin.

4. When the Lord gave a ſpirit to act for him, about eight or nine years ſince, then that was not followed out; there was then a moving of the ſpirit among the hearers of the goſpel; and there was ſomething like love and tenderneſs ſeen; but, by the not following forth of this, that opportunity was loſt by many, that are now dead, like dead ſtones; the edge of that ſpirit was taken away, and that zeal for the Lord of hoſts; and this hath brought us to this ſad caſe this day, that our hearts remain hard and dead under all diſpenſations. I dare appeal to yourſelves, and let your conſcience ſpeak, What have ye done with that edge of a ſpirit of zeal, and with that tenderneſs, that once ſeemed to be amongſt you? When the Lord brought enemies under our feet, and when he gave us a noble opportunity, to have been rid of thoſe, that were known enemies to him, we would ſpare them, and keep them in amongſt us; and now, they are grown above our heads, and we ſadly made to ſmart under their hands.

5. When God had ſettled our church, and had given us reſt, we did not purge our church of theſe inſufficient perſons; although there were ſome that would have had the land purged: But what did we then with the opportunity? Nothing, but gave them truſt again, when they came in humbly, and ſought to live with us; and then, when we would not, they carried themſelves very ſlily; but, what were, and are they ſtill ſeeking, but to devour the children, and to poſſeſs the houſe themſelves? But we had then a noble opportunity to have rid ourſelves of them, which we never had ſince.

6. Another opportunity that we have ſlipped was, the not keeping out the malignants, when the Lord did caſt them out before us, when we could not reſt, but Reſolutioners were on foot to bring them in again; who, by their public reſolutions, prevailed, and did bring them into places of power and truſt, after God had put that opportunity in our hand,

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to have kept out that race, we refuſed to hearken to him, but mixed ourſelves among theſe. And now, we may ſee what evil this hath done: Theſe made us believe their fair words, when war was in their hearts; ſo we brought in theſe people, curſed of God, among us again. And now, do ye not ſee that we are cruelly ſmarting under their cruel hand, when they have got opportunity to act their miſchief, to kill, and to baniſh, and to uſe us moſt cruelly, like ſavages as they are? Is not this evil come upon us, for not taking the opportunity to keep out theſe from amongſt us? And now, ye ſee how the land is filled, defiled and peſtered with this crew; and I will tell you, that God will never make us quit of them, till we engage never to let them in amongſt us again.

7. When Charles II. had broken our covenants, then there was an opportunity put in our hand, to have revolted from under him; When that deed was done, we had a clear call then from God, to have ſtuck to our covenants, and to have ſhaken off the yoke of his tyranny; and it is thought, that, if we had quitted him, and the men of his confederacy, when they quitted us, and brake the covenants, it would have fared better with us; neither would they have been ſo ſtrong as now they are; and moreover, when once that time was ſlipped, there are few found for owning their privileges to do it, and few honoured to contend for the ſame.

8. When the deceaſed tyrant diſcovered more of his abominable wickedneſs, in taking Chriſt's robes from him, and his princely crown from his head, and inveſting himſelf therewith, by the blaſphemous ſupremacy, there was not a teſtimony given againſt it in all Scotland. O! what a great ſin was this, that covenanted Scotland, that once appeared ſo fair for the work of God, and had contended ſo much for the ſame, ſhould have been ſo eaſily laid aſide by that ſupremacy? I will tell you what evil that ſupremacy hath done amongſt many: It hath given an inlet to all ſects; ſo, when we eſſayed to deliver ourſelves, God divided us in his anger, becauſe of this evil that was amongſt us; made us fall before our enemies, and to flee when none purſued.

9. When prelacy entred into the church again, then the moſt part of all the land complied with it; and that was the time and opportunity, when it ſhould have been eaſily cruſhed in the beginning; but the neglecting of this hath made the Lord juſtly plague this generation with the blae marks of this bitter root; and hath diſcovered it ſadly by the ſwearing and drunkenneſs, and all manner of villany, that is committed avowedly in the land; and yet many miniſters and profeſſors have been drawn away, to hear and countenance theſe abjured prelates.

10. When

10. When that ſinful deviſive indulgence entred into the land, then there was an opportunity to have teſtified againſt it; but this was not jointly teſtified againſt, and it hath brought on great evil upon us ſo that the moſt part of miniſters have been drawn away therewith, and have thereby become preachers of ſmooth things; and there were many alſo that looked on, that had the opportunity to have witneſſed againſt it, that connived with and countenanced them that took it: But as I ſaid, the opportunity being loſt at firſt, of teſtifying againſt this evil of the church, hath brought on that, that no ſooner was that ſecond indulgence offered, but multitudes flocked out after the ſame, and they cried out, The indulged was the church.

11. When God had put many opportunities of advantage in his peoples hands many times, but no advantage was taken hold of; and that hath brought us to this, that now we can get no opportunity nor advantage to get from under enemies, but they always get advantage of us. It is ſtrange, to conſider the many that fall into their hands every day; and how many of them are butchered and killed, upon the high ways where they find them. Oh! we may ſee our ſin in our judgment; we may ſee what Saul got for ſparing of Agag; he got never the countenance of God, nor of Samuel after that, but was rejected; ſo, many a time the Lord hath done ſo, he hath made our lives go for our enemies.

12. And laſtly, When we were at ſome ſettlement for ſerving of God, and had the opportunity of reading and praying without diſturbance; but there was little conſcience made of that duty; and now we are deprived of that opportunity, that neither alone nor together can we perform the leaſt duty without hazard. And hath not the ſlighting and ſlipping opportunities, that have been put in our hands, brought this upon ourſelves, that we are made to hurry up and down in deſarts, and in mountains, upon ſuch imminent hazard? There are many more opportunities that I might name, that have been ſlipped by us, that have brought on theſe ſad evils this day: But, well then, ſeeing it is ſo, I would have you to make theſe three uſes of it.

Uſe 1. Learn the hazard of ſitting the opportunity that God puts in your hands for doing of duty; and remember, that it brings on ſpiritual plagues on a people; and then it is a wonder, if ever the Lord grant them an opportunity to do any thing for his work; and, I fear, there be many in this generation, that ſhall never be honoured with any public ſervice for the church again.

Uſe 2. There is this ſad evidence that is ſeen, that we have loſt that which we may never recover, as, when the prelatic party firſt intruded themſelves over us: If we had faithfully

oppoſed

oppoſed and withſtood that in the beginning, we might eaſier have prevailed, if we had kept our ground; and now, they are grown ſo ſtrong, that, ere this wicked generation be rooted out, it will coſt meikle blood; I think, the loſs of the opportunity ſhall loſe all this generation for the moſt part: We might eaſily have rooted them out, when they were in the bud; but now they are grown ſo ſtrong, that they are above our heads.

Uſe 3. I would have you to make this uſe of it, ſlight no more duty, if ye would redeem time: Now ye have a fair occaſion to appear for God, and ſide yourſelves with his people: Take up your ground now, when there is a party drawn to the fields, that are God's open and avowed enemies: The dragon and his angels are faſt flocking together: O! beware, that ye draw not up with theſe. And there is another party, *viz.* Argyle's party, that has fair pretences to be for God, yet paſſeth by all the ſins of the time, homologating thereby the ſin of their backſliding, but will do nought that may diſhearten ſectarians from joining with them: Ye have great need to be earneſt with the Lord, that he would clear up duty unto you, ere ye truſt too far unto theſe. But ye will ſay, Where will we ſtand then, if we liſt not ourſelves with either of theſe? I ſay, ſtand at Chriſt's back, keep the ground that our fathers left us: Remember our covenants, that by them we are bound againſt all ſects and ſectarians whatſoever. O! let us ſtand where our contending fathers ſtood; where they ſtood, when the Lord drew them up, when his cauſe was clearly ſtated, both againſt malignants and ſectarianiſm: Remember the bond of the covenants. But, ſome may poſſibly ſay, that the church would be ſtronger than ever, if we would take in theſe: But, remember, that the arm of fleſh hath been oftentimes over much truſted in; and we are taught by the word of God, not to do evil that good may come of it: Ye muſt uſe no means, but what are approven of God, otherwiſe he will break them in your hand. Let us remember, how ſadly we were plagued at Bothwel-bridge, for the joining with that malignant party, who were for the tyrant's intereſt, and the indulgence. I ſhall ſay no more, but ſtudy to leave near God, that only can clear all your doubts, and diſpel the cloud; and be not over raſh and haſty in any matter, until ye be ſure ye have God's call; for he will be more angry at you, that he hath honoured to contend and ſuffer for him, than with any other people; and ſo, I ſhall cloſe at the time, leaving you to the Lord, for leading and direction. *Amen.*

END OF VOL. I.

A

COLLECTION

OF

PREFACES, LECTURES, AND SERMONS,

Preached upon the Mountains and Muirs of SCOTLAND, in the hotteſt Time of the late Perſecution.

VOL II.

PREFACE.

THE wicked and ungodly are the perſons that ſtand in judgment now; but the day is coming, and faſt haſtening, when there ſhall be another ſort of judgment: A day of ſearching, wherein all ſhall be called, and all muſt appear, where none will be judge but God himſelf; and they that now ſtand in judgment, ſhall not ſtand then. O ſinner! if thou be not found in Chriſt, no ſtanding for thee in judgment then. Thoſe who are kept far under now, and get many unjuſt ſentences paſt againſt them, their heads ſhall be lifted up in this general judgment; then ſhall the righteous have the dominion: For as low as they are now, they ſhall then ſit and judge them, that now are their judges, and ſhall paſs ſentence upon them: *Know ye not that the ſaints ſhall judge the world?* The ſaints then ſhall be admitted to ſit with the judge, and paſs ſentence on the wicked; little do the wicked rulers and judges believe this, That the poor bodies that they have, many a time, paſt unjuſt ſentence againſt, and perſecuted and ſlain, ſhall ſit and judge them, and paſs a righteous ſentence upon them. For in this day of judgment, every one ſhall receive a ſentence, as his works in the world have been. The wicked cannot endure the company of the ſaints now; but this day ſhall make a ſeparation: They get

leave now to ſtand in the congregation of the righteous; but in that day they ſhall be far ſeparated from them. We fear we will miſs many of you in that day: The tares muſt grow amongſt the wheat, till the time of harveſt, and then the reapers will get a commiſſion, to make a ſeparation. O then, there will be many a woful cry and ſhriek amongſt you! Ye who are wicked, will not get leave to come into the congregation of the righteous, unleſs ye be otherwiſe poliſhed than ye are. It may be wondred at, what many of you ſpend your precious time about; we may ſay, That not one of twenty, yea, not one of a hundred of you, is minding eternity as ye ſhould: It is a great pity, that many of you are like brute beaſts, ye eat, drink, and ſleep, and ſo do they; but, oh! how few of you mind eternity, more than the beaſts do! Hath God given you ſouls to murder? Certainly God is ſaying of many of you. It repenteth me that ever I gave that people immortal ſouls, they are ſo careleſs of them; I warn you of it, ye are in great hazard: Wherefore, think ye, were ye made? Was it not to pleaſe your Maker, and to glorify him? How will ye look your Judge in the face, in that day, ye that ſpend your time about the things that will not profit? *Therefore conſider your ways, and turn into his teſtimonies.*

LECTURE V.

MATTHEW iii. 7,——12,

7. *But when he ſaw many of the Phariſees and Sadducees come to his baptiſm, he ſaid unto them, O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*
8. *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*
9. *And think not to ſay within yourſelves, We have Abraham to our father: For I ſay unto you, that God is able, of theſe ſtones, to raiſe up children unto Abraham.*
10. *And now alſo the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: Therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and caſt into the fire.*
11. *I indeed baptiſe you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear: He ſhall baptiſe you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire.*

12. *Whoſe*

12. *Whoſe fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into his garner: But he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*

PEOPLE are oft-times ill prepared for Chriſt's coming amongſt them: But I will tell you good news, ſirs, That where Chriſt hath a mind to come, he will not ſtay away; but he will be at pains to prepare them for himſelf; and the worſe they are prepared for him, it will be the coſtlier to them. Here was a people that he was coming to, and he ſends John the baptiſt before hand, to prepare them for him: Chriſt is ſuch an one, that he will ſpare no pains to a people he is coming to; for here John, through his bleſſing accompanying his miniſtry had great ſucceſs: For, in the foregoing part of this chapter, it is ſaid, that all Judea and Jeruſalem went out to hear him, and to be baptized of him. But when it is ſaid, that all Jeruſalem and Judea went out to hear him, we are not hereby to underſtand, that all theſe cities and people ſubjected themſelves to John's miniſtry; for their after malice and contempt ſhewed the contrary; for the words are to be ſo underſtood, that there were ſome of all ſorts that Chriſt died for, ſo that there is no rank excluded from election, as the apoſtle ſaid, *Let prayer be made for all men, eſpecially for kings:* Not meaning all in authority; but ſuch as are within the election of free grace, and rule for God.

But to paſs this, we come to the words read, they went out to John's preaching and baptiſm; and there were two ſects among them that may be a wonder, eſpecially the Sadduces, who denied the reſurrection, and the immortality of the ſoul: In effect they were brutiſh as beaſts. And the other ſort was the Phariſees, that laid all the weight of their ſalvation upon their own performances, and reſted on them. And John wondred to ſee ſuch come forth, and ſaid, *O generation of vipers! who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?* We are to ſuppoſe that John would have had them receiving the ſad ſentence, *O generation of vipers!* &c. And as for the Phariſees, who reſted on their profeſſion and performances, he charges them to bring forth fruit meet for repentance; ſo he takes occaſion of this in his ſermon, and ſets good works and holineſs together as inſeparable: And there are five reaſons that he backs this with: The firſt is, In what he calls them, *O generation of vipers!* that is, ſerpents, be no more ſo, but evidence your bringing forth fruit, by a holy life. There are ſome things from this reaſon that I would obſerve. As,

1. When God follows the preaching of the goſpel with his bleſſing, he makes it a powerful word; the Lord here brought in both Sadduces and Phariſees. Ye may ſee then, that when

this power of God is preſent, there may be hope for the in-bringing of ſectarians, when the word is ſo, it will be powerful as a two-edged ſword; and ſo it is inexpreſſibly powerful, when it is backed with the bleſſing of God. Here is an evidence of it, ſome perſons being drawn out from among theſe ſects, to receive John's baptiſm: This made John to ſay, I wonder to ſee theſe Scribes, and Phariſees, and Sadduces come here; and if they were all well ſearched, that are in this ſmall number, and known, they would be wondred at to ſee them here. But, O ſeek his bleſſing! and that he will make the word effectual.

2. I would obſerve from this firſt reaſon, That peoples faults ſhould be publicly reproved. John tells them in the breadth of their faces, They were but a generation of vipers; the credit or applauſe of folk are not to be looked to, by the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, when the glory of God, and the purity of ordinances, and their edifying of the people, ſhould make them free to divide the word aright, and to declare the whole counſel of God: He tells them here of their faults and errors; that they were in, as a motive to ſtir them up the more to the ſtudy of holineſs. It is a good uſe and improvement, when people are brought to be truly humbled, under the ſight and ſenſe of their former ſins; and may be a motive to ſet them on to the ſtudy of holineſs. John took no delight to take advantage of them, before the reſt of his hearers, to tell them the dreadfulneſs of the caſe they were in: but as tending to their good, a neceſſity being laid upon him, to tell them plainly what they were O that all the miniſters of Chriſt in Scotland had been thus free in telling people their faults, the ſin and danger had not been ſo great as it is this day!

3. Obſerve from this reaſon, That they that will not take warning, in the time of God's long-ſuffering, when he is pleaſed to warn them by his meſſengers, wrath is abiding them: it ſuppoſeth they are in wrath's way, ripening for judgments, when people will not obey the word of exhortation, by yielding obedience to the goſpel of Chriſt: There is no way to be free of wrath, but by coming to Chriſt, only embracing him, and receiving him in the goſpel. O then! ye that would not be overtaken by wrath, here is the way to be delivered from it: Subject yourſelves to Chriſt, and his ordinances, and take him for your prophet, prieſt and king. Take his mark upon you, and be not aſhamed of his badge and livery.

And now there are two ſorts of folk, that I would warn from this.

(1,) The Sadducees: I compare them to the looſe and profane, that take liberty to do all that their corrupt hearts lead them to.

(2.) Under the Phariſees that are here threatened, I compre-

prehend all that have a profeſſion only, and nothing of religion. O friends! remember that there is none, that ye can build upon as a Saviour, beſides Chriſt, that will ſave you. O flee to him! ſhelter under Chriſt's wings, if ye would be hid in the day of his wrath.

I proceed to a ſecond reaſon; that is, That he perſuades them to repentance; *And think not to ſay within yourſelves*, ſaid he, *that ye have Abraham to your father*; becauſe ye are the children of Abraham after the fleſh, and that ye are within the covenant, therefore ye ſhall be ſaved; for he can eaſily cut you off, and raiſe up children to Abraham, of them that are in as little hope as the very ſtones. And this he brings in, that there is no privilege, where repentance and true grace are wanting, that will evidence them to be God's children, or the ſeed of Abraham after the promiſe. And from this reaſon we would learn this,

That people's external privileges may be a great hiderance in the way of faith and repentance: They are the neck-break of many, and ſo bar them from Chriſt. They thought becauſe they were the children of Abraham after the fleſh, that they were in covenant, and had a right to the privileges of his children: But theſe, who would believe and hope to be ſaved, muſt make it their work, to come to Chriſt, to get faith and repentance, and true grace, that purifieth the heart from dead works, and ſets to the ſtudy of holineſs: Do not think therefore, that ye are in covenant, becauſe in ſome meaſure, ye have been kept free from the groſs pollutions, that the land is involved in, and have been helped to witneſs for him. O do not think that; for if ye reſt there, and think that God will ſpare you, when he is coming with judgment to the land, ye will be diſappointed; ye muſt abandon all your privileges, or whatever ye reſt on beſides Chriſt: for, ere the Lord's word fail, in raiſing and keeping up a ſeed to ſerve him, he will work miracles and wonders. But now, there is a difference betwixt a miracle and a wonder; for a miracle is that, that no creature can do: But in ſome reſpects ſome may do that, that may be looked upon as wondrous. And ſo he ſays, That the Lord, before Abraham want children according to the promiſe, will raiſe them up out of the ſtones: Therefore O friends! let not diſcouragement or deſpondency damp you; for ere his word fail, that he promiſed to Abraham, in name of his church, he will work great miracles, *He will bow down the heavens, and the earth, and make the mountains to flow down before him.* Then ſtudy to believe what he has ſaid; he will carry on his work over all oppoſition; for his work is perfect, and no oppoſition can hinder it.

The third reaſon that he brings in, is this, *The ax is laid to the root of the tree; and every tree that brings not forth good fruit,*

fruit ſhall be hewn down: Therefore I will tell you, that the ax is laid to all the trees, both to the good, and to the bad; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, ſhall be hewn down. And from this reaſon we would obſerve,

1. That God would have a people compaſſed about with the threatnings of the law. Learn to believe this, men and women. That ye are compaſſed about with all the threanings and curſes of the law: Believe ye this? Then I will tell you, as John told the Sadducees, *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.* By the laying down of the ax is underſtood in this ſenſe, as a threatning to cut down, if ye remain barren; and if ye bring not forth good fruit, ye ſee what way ye will go; (would John ſay) Believe ye this, men and women, that are hearers of the goſpel? If ye believed this, ye would ſtudy to bring forth more fruit.

2. Obſerve this, That God's judgments will cut all off, that are hearers of the goſpel, that remain barren under it. And there are two ſorts of people, that God's ax will undoubtedly cut down:

(1.) Theſe that bear the fruit of Sodom; by this we underſtand the profane folk, and theſe that are openly wicked; aſſuredly God will cut you down with his ax of juſtice.

(2.) He will cut down theſe that bear no fruit, as well as theſe that bear ill fruit; Therefore, if ye would be ſpared, and eſcape this ſtroke, be fruitful; let me ſee your fruit, under all the pains that the Lord hath taken, and is taking upon you; and remember that we tell you this, ye that bear no fruit, and ye that bear bad fruit, ſhall be cut down with the ax of God's juſtice, that is lying at the root of all the trees; and ye know not how ſoon God may give it a commiſſion to cut you down, that ye ſhall never more trouble his vineyard.

The fourth reaſon that he brings in, is this, Think not that ye will reſt on external privileges; and do not think that becauſe ye are baptized, and externally in covenant, that ye ſhall be ſpared, if ye want the baptiſm of the Spirit. So obſerve:

1. From this reaſon, That they that would be fruitful and remain among the trees, that will not be hewn down with this ax, they muſt reſolve, not to reſt upon external privileges; for John ſays, *I baptize you with the baptiſm to repentance,* becauſe ye are the perſons that have the promiſe; but ye muſt have the inward ſeal, or elſe all that ye have win to, will avail nothing. O! friends? reſt not upon externals of religion, and think not, that this is a bringing forth of fruit, that ye are come here to countenance the ordinances of Chriſt, although that it be greatly our duty. And wo to them that have the opportunity of hearing the goſpel, and ſlight it: Yet we

tell

tell you, all this will signify nothing, if rested on. O therefore seek after the washing of regeneration; for without this ye cannot bring forth fruit; ye must be ingrafted into Christ, if ye would be fruit bearing Christians. Who is the man that shall be found fruitful, amongst all the trees in God's vineyard? It is only the man that is ingrafted into Christ Therefore if ye would be fruitful, seek this washing of regeneration; (as John says) *One cometh after me, who shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, and with fire;* And ye know that fire is a very purging thing, parting the metal and the dross: And so this fire is fit to purge the soul from all uncleanness; and I will tell you, if ye get not this fire to your soul to burn the branches of corruption, and to purify the heart for Christ, think not (we say, while this is wanting) that all outward means, in the performance of external duties, will avail you any thing; For we have heard tell of many witches that came to many a preaching, and have been very forward in external duties, and yet never knew what it was to have this inward baptism of the Spirit. And we fear that there be many here, that have a paction with the devil, I will not say formerly as witches have; but they have a paction with their lusts; and while ye keep up this paction, ye keep up with Satan; So ye must resolve to break that paction with your lusts; break off by repentance, and seek after this baptism of the Spirit.

2. We would observe from this reason, The more people are acquainted with Christ, they will have higher thoughts of him, and lower thoughts of themselves, as John said, when he saw Christ coming to his baptism; and as he said unto his hearers before, *That he only baptized with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is worthier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; He shall baptize you with the holy Ghost, and with fire.* Ye see the observation is clear, The more that a soul wins to be acquaint with Christ it will have the higher thoughts of him, and abase themselves as John did And it becomes John well here, not to incroach on Christ's glory. He would take none of it; but witnessed that he was not the Christ: because many of his hearers had a high esteem of him: For John was much thought of; for he was sent to prepare the way before Christ. Therefore, O ye that are strangers to Christ! will ye seek acquaintance with him; and the more ye win to know of Christ, he will be the more precious to you.

3. A third observation that we would note here, is this, That the most and best of creatures (as John said are unworthy to serve Christ; though I be sent of Christ, to prepare the way before him, yet I am not worthy to open his shoes. O therefore, Who is sufficient for being in any service for Christ?

Chriſt? My friends, if ye knew the excellency that ye are called to, in Chriſt's ſervice, ye would vilipend all that would be dear to you, beneath him; no loſs of your eaſe, credit, eſteem; no loſs of your gear; yea the loſs of your life; and all in his ſervice, would be nought to you, altho' there were no reward of free grace to be looked for. It is ſo excellent a thing the ſervice of Chriſt, that the angels of heaven are not worthy to the leaſt piece of ſervice to him. O! let us rejoice in him! and let us not regard what we may loſe in his ſervice.

But I ſhall proceed to the fifth and laſt reaſon which John gives, *Whoſe fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.* O ſad word to many! For I will tell you, the day is coming, when he will make a ſeparation and throughly purge his floor. Remember, ye may beguile me, and ye may beguile Chriſtian acquaintances about you; but ye will not beguile Chriſt; for he knows the chaff from the corn. And,

1. The firſt thing that we would obſerve from this reaſon, is this, That the viſible church, while ſhe is militant on earth is a mixture; ſhe is like a corn floor that hath both chaff and corn; or like a corn floor, where there is ſome corn, and ſome tares; and it will be ſo while the church is here below: For the ſtroke was never yet in the church, but there have ſome hypocrites remained hid there. Sometimes the chaff will keep the ſtrokes of the corn, therefore there will be a mixture to the end. So, that doctrine of the independants is not to be received, who admit none into their church but they that profeſs to be in Chriſt, and to be viſible ſaints, *&c.* And ſo they pretend by this to keep a pure church without mixture; whereas, we ſee that the word of God clearly points out the contrary, that there will be a mixture in the church, the good ſeed and the bad. There are ſome that are ſervers only in the outer-court, that partake of all the outward privileges of the church; but not ſerving in the inner court, without this inward baptiſm of the Spirit. Therefore ye ſee there is ground here ſufficient, to confute that opinion of theſe, who would be at a pure church, as thy call it, without mixture: But beware of foſtering ſuch errors, for it may be our trial more than formerly.

But I muſt make a cavat here, That none ought to bring in perſons of lax principles into the church; for that may be dangerous for the drawing away from the profeſſion of this faith: For there is neceſſity for ſuch as are received into the church, to profeſs this faith of repentance, and obedience unto Chriſt, according to his word and goſpel-precepts: But to think to get a pure church, and a clean church without a mixture of hypocrites, *&c.* is but in vain to fancy, until Chriſt's time come, that he will make the ſeparation.

2. The

2. The ſecond obſervation, that we would note here, is this, That tho' there be a mixture in the church, yet Chriſt can make a ſeparation, for he has a ſieve, and he has a fan: But ye will ſay, What is his fan? *Anſw.* Theſe things may be called his fan:

(1.) He hath his word, and by this his word he tells who the hypocrite is: he gives the evidences of the hypocrite in his word, although all the evidences cannot be ſeen by the miniſter, who he is and who not.

(2.) The diſcipline that he hath allowed to be in his church is his fan; for by this (though he purge not all out) he fans the profane that they ſhould not be there.

(3.) Afflictions and trials that he brings in the way of his church is his fan; and this makes many this day, that had a profeſſion to quit it, and caſt themſelves out of the boſom of the church.

(4.) A fourth fan that Chriſt hath in his hand, is death, and this winnows narrowly, many that have a way of living, and dying with the approbation and good thoughts of all about them, of being real Chriſtians; and yet the fan of death, when it comes and aſſaults them, blows them away to the chaff: And the moſt principle fan is death, for then there goes no chaff out with the corn.

(5.) And then the day of judgment will make a full ſeparation, when he will ſay to the goats, Stand ye here upon my left hand; and to the ſheep, Stand ye upon my right hand: And what will he then ſay when he ſeparates and parts them? The believer ſhall then be brought to heaven to inherit the kingdom prepared for them; and the hypocrites ſhall be caſt into unquenchable fire. So he will ſay to the ſheep, Come ye bleſſed of my Father enter into your reſt, there is glory and joy prepared for you; enter your poſſeſſion and wear your crowns, that ſhall not fade away. Hypocrites will now ſteal into the church among his people; but none will ſteal in then. In that day he will ſay to you, I know you not: What ſay ye! do ye not know us; we heard you preach in our ſtreets, and we were members of the church: That is all true, will Chriſt ſay, but ye were but chaff, ye were not the corn; and ſo ye muſt dwell under the ſtroke of my wrath to all eternity. Then the ſeparation will be clear, though ye carry clearly with a fair profeſſion now, yet he will try you, whether ye be the ſheep or the goats: O beloved friends! I warn you then, in time, come and bring forth fruits, that will carry and bring you to heaven: And there ye ſhall be highly privileged, to follow him with palms in your hands. Now as ye would have this deſirable life, then come to Chriſt, and ye ſhall have a ſweet life and a ſatisfying life, yea, a happy and a glorious life for evermore; whereas upon the contrary, the goats

ſhall have a miſerable life; becauſe they are to dwell under wrath everlaſtingly. Then if ye would not have war declared againſt you in heaven, and be made liable to this ſad ſentence of wrath, ſtudy to *bring forth fruit meet for repentance.* Remember, I ſay, I lay it on you this day, old and young, as ye will anſwer at that great appearance, That ye now ſtudy to prepare your hearts to ſeek him, that ye may be of that number, whom he will gather into his garner, when the tares will be burned with unquenchable fire. But I ſhall go no farther.

SERMON XXIV.

MATTHEW iii. 10.

And now alſo the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: Therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and caſt into the fire.

THE goſpel is an ineſtimable treaſure, and is made up of many rare and choice rubies of great price, far beyond the chiefeſt pearls and precious ſtones, that the world can afford. What can the heart of man deviſe or deſire, but it is to be found in the field of the goſpel: But though it be ſuch an ineſtimable and matchleſs treaſure, yet how few are there that attain to any thing of the knowledge of the worth thereof. Ay! how few get the knowledge of the worth thereof. How few are there that get ſuch knowledge of this pearl, that makes them ſell all that they have, and buy it. But wo and wrath will be to you, if ye get not good of this goſpel; better for you ye had been born in that place of the world, where the goſpel was never preached, nor heard tell of; and in a place where Chriſt and ſalvation had not been freely offered and holden forth to you. But now Chriſt hath been freely offered to you in the goſpel; and yet ye are not the better thereof; but ſlight the ſame: Yea, ye ſlight Chriſt and his offers; and wo will be to you in ſo doing. Would ye know the great ſin of this age, and the great ſin of Scotland? It is even this, they have not put that eſteem upon the goſpel, that they ought to have done. And this declares, that

that before ye loſe any thing, or put any thing in hazard for it, ye will rather part with Chriſt, and with all his free offers in the goſpel. What ails our lairds that they come not out to hear the goſpel preached? They dare not for fear of loſing their eſtates: But many will loſe their ſouls in ſaving their eſtates: And curſe the day that ever they were lords or lairds: For, by ſaving their lands and honours, they will loſe their immortal ſouls. There is a great profeſſion, and many profeſſors in this generation: But oh? we fear, few have received Chriſt into their hearts. What is the ſin wherefore the great God is contending with us at this time? It is even this, he hath fully and freely offered his Son Jeſus Chriſt to us in the goſpel and we have ſlighted and diſpiſed him: This is the great ſin of Scotland, we have ſlighted and undervalued the Son of God. He hath been theſe many years knocking at the door of our hearts, but few have opened and letten him in, which is the great ſin wherefore he hath been contending with us theſe many years paſt. But wo will be to thee, that holds this king at the door, and ſtill declares by thy practice, that thou wilt have none of him: For he cares not what ye profeſs, as long as your practice ſpeaks the contrary.

Now John the Baptiſt, Chriſt's fore-runner, comes forth here and preaches, and there comes forth a great multitude (as there is here this day) to hear him; many whereof are in hell this day: And we fear it be ſo with many of you; for your countenance declares, that ye are an obdurate and an impenitent generation. Here John deals very freely with this generation, that he was ſent unto, by calling them a generation of vipers, and forewarning them of their danger: And O! that we might be ſo with you, that ſo we might be free of your blood. Bring forth, ſays he, fruit meet for repentance; and then the argument he makes uſe of, is this, *The ax is laid to the root of the trees; and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and caſt into the fire:* Even, as if he had ſaid, The ax of God's wrath is laid to the root of every profeſſor, and theſe profeſſors, who bring not forth good fruit, ſhall be hewn down and caſt into hell. Many of you think not much of the hearing of preachings; but there is not a preaching that ye hear, that ye are not wrought upon by, to make you forſake your ſin and to draw near unto God; but it is a ſtroke given you with this ax, to take the life of your ſouls. Now a ſtroke this ſabbath, and if ye get a preaching the next ſabbath, it is another ſtroke; and ſo one ſtroke after another, till at length ye plunge down into the fire of hell.

Now in theſe words which I have read, we have,

I. The condition of theſe, who are under the means of grace and ſalvation, and never bettered thereby: The ax is laid to the root of all ſuch trees, and is ready to cut them down: The juſtice of God is ſtanding with the ax of God's wrath, ready to hew you down: And we fear it be ſo with the moſt part of you, ye that are the dry and withered profeſſors, that have come theſe many years, to follow after ordinances, and are never profited thereby, and have never been purſued to leave of, and forſake your ſins. O ſet about this work of holineſs and righteouſneſs! (which is meant by the good fruit) for the ax is ready to cut you down. When David ſaw the deſtroying angel ſtanding over againſt Jeruſalem, with a ſword drawn in his hand, David thought that a fearful ſight: But we tell you, and warn you of it, the great God is marching on the fore front of his hoſt, coming againſt Scotland, and will take vengeance upon all that have been ſlighters of his Son Chriſt Jeſus.

II. We have in theſe words, The Lord's impartial dealing with all theſe perſons, every man and every woman, great and ſmall, rich and poor; no exception of perſons with him; For, whoever they be, that he finds barren and fruitleſs, they ſhall be hewn down, and caſt into the fire. Power and moying among men, cauſes this perſon, and the other perſon get favour, and be ſpared, but it will not be ſo with him; for there will be no reſpect of perſons with him: But, be who they will, be they rich be they poor, be they old be they young, none ſhall be ſpared, that will be found fruitleſs and barren ſouls. If ye be found an old ſtock without fruit, ye ſhall be hewn down and caſt into the fire of hell.

III. We have that in the words, which makes perſons the objects of God's wrath; and it is this, Even the want of good fruit.

IV. We have the ſentence they get, They are hewn down and caſt into the fire. The ſentence is paſt already; we have all gotten the ſentence, and if we get not faith and repentance, there is no recalling of the ſentence again, no eviting of burning in hell to all eternity. This ſhall be the lot of all barren ſouls.

V. The fifth thing we have to take notice of here, is, The dreadfulneſs of the puniſhment, that ſhall be inflicted upon the barren trees: If it were but ſuch a puniſhment, wherewith men puniſh, to have a leg or an arm, or though it were the head cut off, that were but an ordinary puniſhment, it were nothing to bide it: But they will be hewn down, and caſt into hell's fire.

VI. and laſtly, We have the duration of this miſery and torment: If it were for an hundred, or a thouſand, or ten thouſand years, and then to be delivered out of it, there would

would be ſome ground of comfort; but there is no eſcaping, or out-winning through all eternity: And there the worm will never die, and the fire will never be quenched. If ye knew and believed your hazard, there would be another ſort of a ſtir amongſt you than there is: The father would ſay to the child, What will we do, child, if we be caſt into hell, and there be tormented through all eternity? The huſband would ſay to the wife, and the wife to the huſband, What will we do, if we be thrown down to hell, and there tormented through eternity? But, Oh! there are few ſuch fears, and few ſuch queſtions, we apprehend amongſt you.

We had occaſion elſewhere, to ſpeak to the firſt two of theſe things obſerved from the words: Now we come to the third obſervation, which is this, What makes perſons the objects of God's wrath? We tell you from the Lord, there are many in that unquenchable fire of hell, that findeth the truth of it to their ſad experience, that did as little look for it as any of you do, that are now tormented with the torments that we are telling you of; they are roaſting and tormenting in theſe flames of hell: And what is the reaſon of it? If ye had acceſs to commune with them, they would tell you, that their unbelief and turning to God from the evil of their ways, and not bringing forth fruit unto God, was the cauſe of all their miſery. Now, what is the main and the only thing that expoſes people to this ſad and miſerable condition? We anſwer, That it is for the want of good fruit. *The ground that is oft rained upon, and bringeth not forth good fruit, is near to curſing, and the end to be burnt:* and we fear it be ſo with you in this place of the country; Galloway hath been often watered with the goſpel, when other places have been dry; ſo, if ye bring not forth good fruit, ye are near to curſing. Ye may read Luke xiii. 6, 7, 8, 9. which is ſuppoſed to be a conference betwixt mercy and juſtice; juſtice pleading to have vengeance executed, mercy crying, ſpare them till they get another ſhower of ordinances; ſpare them till they get another offer of Chriſt, and of ſalvation through him; and then, if they embrace him not, and bring not forth fruit to his praiſe, I ſhall plead for them no more, but ſhall give you leave to execute wrath and vengeance upon them. It is even as a gardener were going through his orchard, and where he finds a dry and withered branch he takes his hedging knife, and cuts it from the tree, and brings it in, and caſts it on the fire; and ſo ſhall it be with every one that brings not forth good fruit, they ſhall be cut down and caſt into the fire of hell. But it may be, ye will ſay, Seeing good fruit is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, what is requiſite to the bringing forth of good fruit? In anſwer to this,

I. I ſhall ſpeak ſomewhat concerning that.

II. I ſhall ſpeak to ſome aſſertions from this doctrine, againſt ſome of the errors that we are like to have to do with in our day and time.

And, III. I ſhall make application.

I. Now for the firſt. What is requiſite to the bringing forth of good fruit? ſaith the trembling ſoul. O! is there any ſuch among you this day? But in anſwer to this, we ſay theſe things are neceſſary:

1. It is requiſite that the tree be good. Would ye bring forth good fruit? I muſt tell you, the tree muſt be good, before the fruit be good; for a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. But ye may ſay, What is it to have the tree good? I will tell you it is this: Ye muſt be tranſplanted; We grow all in a very baſe and barren ſoil, ſo long as we are in the ſtate of nature. Ye that are in this ſtate, (and, Oh! we fear, there be many ſuch here,) ſo long as ye continue in it, your moſt holy performances are like the cutting off a dog's neck, and the murdering of men, Iſa. lxvi. 3. So, till ye be taken out of the old ſtock of nature, and planted in the new and living vine Chriſt Jeſus, ye cannot bring forth any good fruit: Let you multiply as many duties as ye pleaſe, tho' ye ſhould pray, till your knees fail under you; and though ye ſhould deal all that ye have to the poor, let you do never ſo many good works, they will be to no purpoſe, ſo long as ye are in the ſtate of nature. Therefore ſhall we aſk all of you theſe queſtions, Are ye in the ſtate of nature, or in the ſtate of grace? Are ye converted, or unconverted? Are ye in Chriſt, or out of Chriſt? Are ye ſervants unto God, or are ye ſervants unto Satan? O! will ye aſk theſe, and ſuch like queſtions at yourſelves, and at one another; for, if ye be in a ſtate of nature, all your performances are but adding ſin to ſin: Therefore, ariſe and cry, night and day, unto the great huſbandman, That he would come and cut you off the old ſtock, that ye have long grown upon, and plant you into his bleſſed Son Jeſus Chriſt, who is the true and living vine. John xv. *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much fruit.* This is the union that is betwixt Chriſt and his people, and all the members of his myſtical body; and let me tell you, if ye be ſtrangers to this union, ye are ſtrangers to partaking of the benefits of his death and ſufferings; ye are ſtrangers to the having and entertaining of communion and fellowſhip with him here; and if ye be ſo, ye ſhall be debarred from having any communion and fellowſhip with him to all eternity.

Now, what is to be planted in this noble and living vine, but to believe in his name? As ye have it, John vi. 56. *He that eateth my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him:*

him: That is, to eat his fleſh and drink his blood by faith. It is nothing elſe then, but believing in his name So long then, as ye are ſtrangers to cloſing with Chriſt, upon his own terms, all your prayers, and all your coming to preachings, is but the heaping up of wrath upon your own heads. Therefore we adviſe you, to labour to know what it is, to be ingrafted in the true and living vine, that ſo ye may bring forth good fruit; for till then, all the fruit that ye bring forth, will be but evil fruit. Oh! many an ill tree is here this day; but few good. Oh! that ye would cry mightily to God, That he would ſend forth his Spirit, to convince you of ſin and miſery. And, Oh! that ye would be all diſquieted, and find no reſt in your conſciences, from the ſight and ſenſe of ſin and miſery, till ye be neceſſitated to flee, by faith, unto Jeſus Chriſt, and get the union made up betwixt him and your ſouls.

2. It is requiſite for the bringing forth good fruit, that it be according to the word of God. Your fruit muſt be according to his will revealed in his word; they that caſt at his word, from being their rule, be their ſhews and pretences what they will, they have nothing of that, which he will account good fruit. Whatever be the blind zeal of papiſts and quakers, as it hath not a ground in the word of God, ſo it is but ill fruit in his ſight. Therefore let the will and command in his word be eyed by you in all that you do, and then it will be looked on as good fruit.

3. It is requiſite to the bringing forth good fruit, that it pleaſe God. We fear many of you pleaſe yourſelves, becauſe miniſters and other profeſſors are pleaſed with you. Oh! many in theſe lands, at this time, are greatly deceiving themſelves, by pleaſing themſelves with that, which is not pleaſing to God. Your wares muſt be ſuch as pleaſe the merchant; of which you may ſee in that word, Heb. xiii. 16. *But to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with ſuch ſacrifices God is well pleaſed.* For it is that which is pleaſing to him, that is good fruit. But ſome of you may be queſtioning within yourſelves, and ſaying, O! if I knew what fruit would pleaſe him? In anſwer to this, I would ſay,

(1) What ye do muſt be done in faith, Heb. xi. 6. *Without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe him.* Luther ſays, "They "that go about to pleaſe God without faith, go about to "pleaſe him with ſin." Then if ye would pleaſe God, ye muſt firſt be believers; ye muſt accept of Chriſt, and cloſe with him by faith; and then, if once ye were in him, ye ſhall be fit for performing ſuch duties, as will be pleaſing to him; but never till then.

(2) If ye would bring forth fruit well pleaſing to God, then whatever duties ye go about, ye muſt go about them with a depen-

dependence upon Jeſus Chriſt. We fear many of you go about your prayers without Chriſt, and then they are but ſin: Ye that go to him in your own ſtrength, without depending upon Jeſus Chriſt, you and your prayers will be both rejected; for, he is our high prieſt who makes atonement for us. So ye muſt go to God through Chriſt, and depend upon him for acceptance, both to your perſon and performances; and then will ye be well-pleaſing to God; but not till then. O but it be ſad, that ſo many of you ſhould live ſo long under ordinances, and yet remain ignorant of the way to obtain ſalvation.

(3.) If ye would bring forth good fruit, ſuch as will be well-pleaſing unto God, then ye muſt get all your furniture from Chriſt, for going about all your duties. Whenever ye go to prayer, either by yourſelves, or with others, look to him for furniture, and then will your duties be well pleaſing to his Father, and ſo be looked upon as good fruit. But, Oh! many have ground to mourn for their duties, as well as for their ſins, becauſe they go about them in their own ſtrength.

(4.) Would ye bring forth good fruit? then whatever ye do, ye muſt eye the glory of God in it, 1 Cor. x. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* See then, that whatever ye do, ye have a warrant for it in his word, and do it in faith, with an eye to his glory, and then it will be accepted of, as good fruit.

(5.) Would ye bring forth good fruit? then labour to have your duties flowing from a principle of love to God. We fear a natural conſcience puts many of you to your prayers, and brings you forth to your meetings. Who of you dare ſay, That it is love to him, and to his ordinances, that brings you forth to preachings? And, who of you does love conſtrain to riſe up in the morning, and to go to your knees to ſeek the Lord? And, who of you does love conſtrain to read his word, and to meditate upon it? And, who of you does love conſtrain to ſupply his diſtreſſed members in their neceſſities? Ye may try yourſelves, if it be ſo with you: But oh! we fear, that fear of hell puts many to their duty; becauſe the natural conſcience will not let the ſoul have peace, till it go about duties. But love to God, and making conſcience in obeying his commandments, muſt put you to your duty, or no acceptance with God for you; for otherwiſe ye will not be looked upon, as theſe that bring forth good fruit.

4. It is requiſite to the bringing forth of good fruit, that there be an honeſt heart, ſuch as the pſalmiſt prays for, Pſal. cxix. 80. *Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes, that I be not aſhamed.* O! many play the hypocrite with God; they draw near with their mouths, and do honour him with their lips, when their hearts are far removed from him; ſuch fruit as

that

that will not pleaſe God. Who of you dare ſay, That you are not hypocrites? Are your hearts preſent with God, as your bodies are preſent here? And are you ſending up your hearts to God by prayer? If it be ſo, that ye are darting up ejaculations to him in the time of his worſhip, *&c.* it is well; ye may have ground to hope, that ye are of theſe that are bringing forth good fruit. But, are ye of theſe, that are ſatisfying themſelves with bringing their bodies here, and letting their hearts go with the fool's eyes, through the ends of the earth? Then remember that word that ye have, Mal. i. 14. *But curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.* O but ſincerity be much worth in the ſight of the Lord! David ſays, Pſal. cxxxix. 23. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: Try me, and know my thoughts; and ſee if there be any wicked way in me.* If ye be not upright and ſincere before God, your fruit is not good fruit.

5. Alſo it is requiſite, if ye would bring forth good fruit, that ye bring forth fruit in ſeaſon, Pſal. i. 3. But ye may ſay, What is it to bring forth fruit in ſeaſon? I anſwer, if ye would bring forth fruit in ſeaſon, ye muſt not confound duties: As for inſtance, when ye are hearing preaching, as ye are doing now, ye muſt not be muttering and praying; for hearing the word preached is one duty, and prayer is another. And ye muſt go about your ſpiritual duties in their ſeaſon, and your civil duties in their ſeaſon. Indeed it is ſeaſonable, that the firſt road ye go in the morning, be to God to pour out your hearts before him; and then read his word, and meditate upon it, and pray for his bleſſing upon it, and labour to keep your hearts with God through the day. And upon the ſabbath day, ſearch out your idols, and endeavour to get a ſtroke upon them, that ſin may be ſubdued under you: And ſearch out your wants, and lay them out before the Lord that he may ſupply them; for theſe are ſeaſonable fruits unto the Lord. But, O! how many are there that ſatisfy themſelves with the bare form of duties, and preſs not for the power and life of godlineſs. How many are there, that ſatisfy themſelves with a few words in the morning and evening, to quiet their guilty conſciences, without any ſenſe of the evil of ſin, or need that they are in of Chriſt, or any ſpiritual life upon their ſoul, and take no care to keep their hearts through the day, but can let faith and conſcience flee upon every ſmall temptation? Theſe are very evil and unſeaſonable fruits. O but there are very few, who bear and bring forth ſeaſonable fruit in this day we live in! But, O ſtudy to make your calling and election ſure, now when the Lord is threatning to make an end of us by his judgments! I charge all of you to be at pains about this. What if this ax of his

wrath hew you down before you get your calling and election made ſure: And then, what ſhall your miſery be, but eternal ſeparation from his preſence! O! will ye remember, that although many are called, yet few are choſen. Many are called by the outward call of the goſpel, but few are called by the inward call of the Spirit. O! reſt not till ye get it made ſure, that ye belong to the Lord; for I fear, that if the devil had his own from amongſt you, we would be but a very ſmall company. Therefore make this ſure, that ye are brought from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. Bnt, oh! we fear, that many of you have ſit your time; therefore delay no longer, for if death find you in the ſtate of nature, then there will be no remedy for you; but ye ſhall be hewn down with this ax of God's juſtice; and caſt into the fire of hell, out of which there will be no redemption. Lord make you conſider it in time, and to him be praiſe. *Amen.*

SERMON XXV.

MATTHEW iii. 10.

And now alſo the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: Therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and caſt into the fire.

WHERE will ye all be ere it be long? Truly ere thirty or forty years go about, the moſt part of us will be in little bulk; for we will be either in heaven or hell. Ye are now well gathered out, and ye ſit cloſe, but ere it be long, we ſhall be as far ſundry as Lazarus and Dives were. Many of you get leave to eat and drink, and keep company with the righteous, but ere many years run, ye ſhall be as far ſundry as Lazarus and the rich glutton are. Should ye not be taken up to know, where your eternal dwellings will be? Many are taken up with houſes and lands, to get an inheritance made ſure to themſelves and others; and many in ſeeking and keeping the world, loſe their immortal ſouls. But, oh! how few are ſeeking the houſe which is not made with hands, that is eternal in the heavens? 2 Cor. v. 1. O! where will the moſt part of you be, ere it be long? We fear ye will be burn-

burning in the flames of God's wrath. Many of you are living at peace and eaſe now, but if ye bring not forth other ſort of fruit than ye have done, ere long ye ſhall be burning in the flames of God's wrath: And this is an evidence of it, that we ſee that ye are no more concerned at the hearing of this, than if ye were brute beaſts. O that we knew what would prevail with you! If we knew what would do it, we would even venture our fleſh and our blood for you. Tho' there be but one thing needful, O! how few of you chooſe that good part, that part that cannot be taken from you? Oh! many Marthas in this day, (though it be a very evil time) that are taken up with nothing but the houſe, and the corn, and the cattle. But, Oh! who is minding the one thing neceſſary? Oh! ſirs, ye have but one ſoul to keep, and will ye loſe that? Will ye be at no pains to ſave your immortal ſouls? Are ye reſolved, ſay what we will, that ye will go on in a courſe of ſin, forgetting God, and your own ſoul's ſalvation? God is crying to you, hold your hand; and we are crying to you, will ye not turn from your tranſgreſſions, by faſting and mourning, and ſupplication? O! where will we find you in the laſt day? The greateſt part of you, we fear, will be ſet among the goats in that day O! will ye be prevailed with, to turn from your ſins and iniquities? O if it were in the power of our hand, we would fain have you taking warning to flee from the wrath which is to come.

Now remember the text, *The ax is laid to the root of every tree;* and if ye bring not forth good fruit, ye are nearer the hewing down than ever ye were before. Ye know not when this ax will be lifted up, and give you the laſt ſtroke: Ye know not, but this night your ſouls ſhall be required at your hands. O! are ye ready ſirs? Little know many of you how near your day of counting with your judge is: Ye know not, but within twenty-four hours, ye ſhall be ſtanding before your Judge. O! but ye have great need to get your peace made up with God, and your debt diſcharged. We fear that there are but few of you, that have ever counted with God. Why come ye not, and why flee ye not to the cautioner to be diſcharged? O! how much debt are ye owing, and yet ye ſleep ſound. Think ye not that juſtice will call you to an account; yea, ye ſhall be called to an account for the leaſt item that ye are guilty of. And if ye die undiſcharged of your debt, then ye will be caſt into the hopeleſs priſon, out of which ye will never eſcape to all eternity.

Now, there is no leſs than life and death lying at the ſtake; but I ſhall not weary you with diſcourſe: Ye are wearied of God, and he is wearied of you, and it is like ye will get your will. He hath been long threatning to take away the goſpel from you; and he hath kept ſomething of it with you, after

other places have been deprived of it: And now we ſee ye are wearied of it, and this will cauſe him to take it from you alſo. And, *wo will be to you, if he depart from you*, Hoſ. ix. 12 It is like, that ye will be brought to that, which Iſrael was brought to of old, to be without teaching prieſts. Now, what will ye do with this word, as ye have with many other words? We think the Lord is ſaying, *As I live, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked.* Why will ye die? Why will ye not turn; I would ſpare you, notwithſtanding of all the evil that ye have done, and notwithſtanding of all your former barrenneſs. Or he is ſaying, *I will leave you without excuſe, in the day when I count with you.* What then will ye do with this word? Iſa. lv. 10, 11 *For as the rain cometh down, and the ſnow from heaven, and returneth not hither, but watereth the earth; ſo ſhall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe.* The word ſhall not return void; for if it ſeal not up ſalvation to you, it ſhall ſeal up your damnation.

Ye may remember what we were laſt upon in the forenoon, which was this, *That the trees, which bear not good fruit, are ready to be hewn down, and caſt into the fire; and that they are trees appointed and prepared for burning.* Alas! that there are ſo many that have brought ſo much ill fruit forth. What hath been the fruit, that many of you have brought forth? Are there not among you ſabbath-breaking, worldly-mindneſs, drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, lying, filthy ſpeaking, and many of theſe ſins, of which the apoſtle Paul tells, *That they which do ſuch things, ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God*, Gal. v. 21. It is alſo told you who they are, that ſhall not inherit the kingdom of heaven, 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. *Know ye not, that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the kingdom of God?* Rev. xxii. 15. *For without are dogs, and ſorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whoſoever loveth and maketh a lie.* The wicked are compared to dogs: Curſed Cain was a diſhonour to his Father; but ye have been a diſhonour to God, whom ye ſhould have glorified. It is not leaves that will do your turn; it is not a profeſſion that will do your turn, but ye muſt alſo have good fruit. The fooliſh virgins had fair leaves; but when the bridegroom came, they were kept out, becauſe they had not good fruits.

We told you what was requiſite to the bringing forth good fruit. And you may remember that this was one thing requiſite, That good fruit be brought forth in ſeaſon; your fruit muſt be ſeaſonable as to the time; young folk ſhould bring forth good fruit in their youth, as good Joſiah did, for he brought forth good fruit in his tender age; and John the Baptiſt began ſoon to ſeek the Lord. Old men and old women, ye that are old withered ſtocks, it is a hundred to one,

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if ever ye bring forth good fruit all your days: But will ye go to God, and pray him to give you the ſenſe of the evil of your ſins; and go to the Prince exalted, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and pray him to give you repentance, and the free remiſſion of ſins: O! will ye remember, that there is no repentance in the grave, where ye are going: Therefore, if ye get not repentance and the remiſſion of ſin here, ye will undoubtedly periſh. O but ye have need to mourn, for the many ill ſpent days and nights that are gone over your heads, and for much ill fruit that ye have brought forth! We told you to give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure; for this is a fruit that is well pleaſing to God, and profitable to yourſelves, and that which will yield you comfort at your dying day, when no other thing can give you pleaſure and ſatisfaction: For, if this be wanting, when ye muſt count with God, no other thing will give you ſolid peace. Therefore delay not this great buſineſs.

Another fruit is watchfulneſs; a duty much called for, now when the Lord is threatning to turn all things upſide down. After that Chriſt had foretold the deſtruction that was coming upon the temple and Jeruſalem, he gives this exhortation, Luke xxi. 36. *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be counted worthy to eſcape all theſe things, that ſhall come to paſs, and to ſtand before the ſon of man.* But ye may ſay, What ſhould we watch againſt? I anſwer, ye ſhould watch againſt the ſins, ſnares, and errors of the time. Be ſtill upon your watch-tower, that the enemy get not an advantage againſt you; for he is ſtill going about as a roaring lion ſeeking whom he may devour. Alſo watch unto prayer, watch unto reading, watch unto hearing, yea, watch unto all duties; for ye that are ſtrangers to watchfulneſs, ye are ſtrangers to all the duties of Chriſtianity. Therefore watch at all times, in all places, and among all company. David keeped his mouth with a bridle when the wicked was before him. O but ye have great need to watch, when among wicked perſons! ye that have any name or ſhew of piety, when ye join with the wicked in their ſin, ye harden them in their ſin, and bring an evil report upon the truth. Alſo, we would have you much in ſecret prayer; for that is a good fruit, and a ſeaſonable fruit for this time: If ever there was a time to draw near to God by prayer, it is now, when all things are threatning deſolation. See what the apoſtle ſays, 1 Peter iv. 7. *But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore ſober, and watch unto prayer.* O my friends! this is a time, wherein ye are called to be much in ſecret prayer. We have that charity for ſeverals of you, that ye make conſcience of this duty morning and evening. But, O! who is wreſtling with the Lord as Jacob did? This is a time where-

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in we have all need to be much in prayer, and to wreſtle with the Lord in it.

Another good fruit is ſobriety: *Wo to them that are drinking their wine in bowls, and are forgetting the affliction of Joſeph.* Wo to them that are now ſurfeiting and ſatisfying themſelves with the creatures, and are forgetting the afflictions of the Lord's people! Then ye that are profeſſors live ſoberly, as to the uſe of meat and drink; for this is a part of the duty of ſobriety. Be alſo ſober in apparel; there is a pertinent ſcripture for this, which you may read, Iſaiah iii. 16. to the end of the chapter. And conſider what is ſaid, ver. 24. *And it ſhall come to paſs inſtead of ſweet ſmell there ſhall be ſtink*, &c. There the Lord threatens to give them ſtink inſtead of perfumes; and we fear that many of you ſpend more time betwixt the comb and the glaſs than ye do at your prayers; as an honeſt man ſaid, when he was coming up the ſtreet, and looking in at the window he ſees one dreſſing herſelf, and when he ſees her go ſo often back and forward to the glaſs, he came away weeping, and one meeting him wondred to ſee him in that poſture, thinking that he had gotten ſome ſad news; and aſked what ailed him? I have (ſaid he) ſeen one taking more pains and care for her body than I have taken for my ſoul. Be ſober in expreſſions, that is another part of this duty: It is a ſhame to hear the expreſſion of ſome profeſſors and their diſcourſes, ſo that there is little difference betwixt them and the profane So then ſobriety in meat, drink, apparel, and expreſſions is good fruit. Micah vii. 8. *He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee; but to do juſtly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Alſo to mourn with the mourners of Zion, is a good fruit, Lam. i. 12. *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.* O then! would ye bring forth ſeaſonable fruit, in the time ye live in? then ſympathize with Zion in this day of her affliction. Would ye be ſpared in the day of the Lord's fierce wrath? then mourn for your ſins and the ſins of the land. Read the ninth chapter of Ezekiel; and ye will find that when the men with the ſlaughter-weapons went through to deſtroy, they got a commiſſion to ſpare all that were marked; and there were none marked but the mourners only; and theſe were paſſed by and ſpared. O but Iſaiah and Jeremiah's frame would be a ſuitable frame for us this day that we live in! O but weeping and mourning and ſupplication, day and night, were a ſuitable frame for us this day! There are many things that call for it; threatned judgments and wrath, that we may fear, ſhall come upon us, call for it; all things call for it; but, O!

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we fear that there be but few of you that are crying to the Prince exalted for repentance and remiſſion of ſin. O cry to him that he would power the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication upon you, that ye may cry to him day and night, that he would ſpare a remnant and not make a full end! for it may be, ere all be done, that a cottage in a wilderneſs would be thought a ſweet lodging. The time is like to come, and not long to it, that the top of a mountain would be thought a ſweet dwelling place. It will be your wiſdom therefore, to prepare for that day.

Another ſeaſonable fruit this day, is ſelf-denial: This is ſeaſonable fruit, to be denied to the world, and all creature-comforts: There are great pains taken in keeping them, and, by keeping them many loſe their immortal ſouls: But it is very like, that we will be all alike in worldly things ere it be long: Ye that have any thing of the world be denied to it; looſe your grips of it; for, if it be not ſo, it will make you loſe your ſouls.

Another thing requiſite for bringing forth good fruit, and that is univerſal fruitfulneſs; both inſide branches, and outſide branches muſt be fruitful: There are many that have a fair outſide, that inwardly are full of enmity and wickedneſs; and many that ye would think had fruit on the ſabbath, but through the week care not what they do; but will cheat, and back-bite their neighbours; and ſome will ſeparate the two tables of the law: They ſeem to have reſpect to the firſt, their duty to God; but, when they come to the ſecond, to the performing of their duty to their neighbour, in that they fail; and thereby they cauſe the way of truth to be evil ſpoken of. And others, who ſeem to ſhew ſome reſpect to the ſecond table of the law, yet have no reſpect to the firſt. But if ye bring forth good fruit, ye muſt have an univerſal reſpect to all God's commandments, and all your members muſt be fruitful therein: Your tongue that hath been employed for Satan, muſt now be employed for God. Your coming forth to preachings will not do your turn; many come out to the preachings upon the ſabbath, that through the week their tongues will go like bells with curſing and ſwearing. Lord ſave us from ſuch profeſſors! Alſo, your head, your hands, and your feet and all your other members, muſt all be employed in the ſervice of God; for if ye live in the omiſſion of any known duty, or in the practice of any known ſin, it will ſink you down to hell.

Another thing that is requiſite to the bringing forth of good fruit is this, ye muſt be conſtant in bringing forth fruit: It muſt not be by fits and ſtarts, ye muſt be conſtant, and continue in your duty to the end, if ye would be ſaved. O! how many had been touched at preaching, and have ſome-

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thing like a real work upon their ſoul, who ſoon have turned like the dog to the vomit, to live again in their old ſins. Many in Scotland flouriſhed fair, when theſe days began, that are now but withered branches: But, if ye be trees of God's planting, he will make out this to you, that is in Pſalm xcii. 13, 14. *Thoſe that be planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the courts of our God. They ſhall ſtill bring forth fruit in old age; they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing.* Ye ſhould think upon theſe things, as things that concern you very near. Obſerve again,

1. That although good works be very neceſſary, yet they have no hand in our juſtification, as the papiſts ſay, but we are juſtified only by free grace.

2. Though good works be neceſſary, yet they cannot merit pardon of ſin, nor ſalvation; for this we muſt expect for his free mercies ſake; as you have it in Neh. ix. 31. *Nevertheleſs for thy great mercies ſake, thou didſt not utterly conſume them.* And Pſalm cvi. 8. *Nevertheleſs, he ſaved them for his name's ſake: That he might make his mighty power to be known.* Our good works can merit no good thing to us; for any good works that any body works, they are wrought by the Spirit of God: But it is not eaſy for perſons to quit their own righteouſneſs, and to lay hold alone upon the merits and righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

3. Though good works be not meritorious, yet the Lord is pleaſed to reward our good works, through Chriſt.

4. Although natural men go about good works, yet they are but an abomination in the ſight of God; as ye have it in Prov. xv. 8. *The ſacrafice of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord.*

PREFACE.

WE need not aſk this queſtion at you to day, What is become of all the noblemen of Scotland, that there are none of them here? For they are poſting to the pit; and the Lord is ſaying, Let them be going ſtay them not, ſince they have rejected me, and forgotten all my kindneſſes. Neither need we aſk this queſtion, What is become of all our gentry, that there are ſo few of them here? For they have choſen Demas's portion, and have left the ſtandard of the goſpel, and choſen the world. Neither need we aſk this ſad and undeſirable

desirable question, What is become of all the ministers and professors, that once appeared for this gospel in the wilderness? For they have taken a wearying in the wilderness, and are looking back to Egypt again, as the children of Israel did. But for you that are come here this day, there are two things that I would inform you of; and the first is this, The day of the Lord's coming is near at hand; he is hastening him on his way; therefore see how ye will meet him; for his coming will be a surprizal to many. And the second thing that I would inform you of, is this, That his coming will produce dreadful things to the west of Scotland; for he hath given them a fourfold garland to wear beyond other places: And remember this, *To whom much is given, of them much is required.*

The first garland that he hath bestowed upon them, is the garland of straightness in the way. And although there hath been much treachery and double dealing, yet there hath been more straightness found in the west than in any other corner of the land.

The second garland that he hath honoured the west with, hath been much zeal for God and his way. Although this day there be a great decay in this, and a drawing back in many, to the camp of the enemies, yet there hath more zeal appeared there, than in any other place of the land.

The third garland that he hath bestowed upon the west of Scotland, is, That there hath been more seriousness among them. Although formality hath been our plague in this day, yet there hath been more seriousness seen here than in any other place, though alas! too little. But, O! believe it, sirs, your guiding of these garlands so basely, will make his coming to be dreadful to many therein. Other places are like to rob you of these garlands; O! labour to hold fast, that no man take your crown from you.

The fourth garland that the west of Scotland hath been honoured with, hath been to suffer for his name's sake. The west hath been harassed with sufferings beyond any other corner; and indeed, if the west's sufferings were removed from them to other places, I would be afraid they should lose all these rich garlands. Wherefore, O! stand fast by the Lord, and by his way; for remember, *To whom much is given, of them much will be required again.* The pains hath been great that the Lord hath taken upon you, by a powerful pure gospel, and by judgments and chastisements; I mean, suffering for his cause and truth. O! see how ye have carried under all the care and kindness of God. Let us go to him, and seek his presence to be amongst us.

LECTURE VI.

ZEPHANIAH iii. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

8. *Therefore wait ye upon me, ſaith the Lord, until the day that I riſe up to the prey: For my determination is to gather the nations that I may aſſemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: For all the earth ſhall be devoured with the fire of my jealouſy.*
9. *For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent.*
10. *From beyond the river of Ethiopia, my ſupplicants, even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offering.*
11. *In that day ſhalt thou not be aſhamed for all thy doings, wherein thou haſt tranſgreſſed againſt me: For then I will take away out of the midſt of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou ſhalt no more be haughty becauſe of my holy mountain.*
12. *I will alſo leave in the midſt of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they ſhall truſt in the name of the Lord.*
13. *The remnant of Iſrael ſhall not do iniquity, nor ſpeak lies: Neither ſhall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: For they ſhall feed and lie down, and none ſhall make them afraid.*

AS the holy God is jealous over his people, to puniſh them for their iniquity, when they rebel againſt him; ſo he is likewiſe jealous to puniſh ſeverely thoſe that are the inſtruments of his people's puniſhment; for he ſays by the prophet Zechariah, *I am greatly diſpleaſed with the heathen: I am jealous for Jeruſalem, and for Zion with a great jealouſy: And I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen that are at eaſe: For I was but a little diſpleaſed and they helped forward the affliction*, Zech. i. 14, 15. It is true that the Lord many times makes uſe of the wicked, for the ſcourging of his people for their trials; but it is as true, when he is graciouſly pleaſed to viſit his people with mercy, that he will caſt the rod into the fire; and this they may expect and be aſſured of, to be the reward of the wicked from the Lord.

Now, as for the ſcope of the words read, it may be taken up thus. The children of Iſrael, and the children of Judah had provoked the Lord by their ſins, and ſo the Lord reproves them ſharply and chaſtiſeth them with the rods of men; and he

he makes uſe of the heathen for puniſhing of them. And alſo it ſays this, That as his jealouſy provoked him to ſmite them for their faults, ſo likewiſe when he hath done ſo, his jealouſy alſo for his people provokes him to gather the nations, and ſharply to reprove them, and rebuke them ſadly for their cruelty againſt his people: Therefore he commands his people to *wait upon him until he riſe up unto the prey: For my determination is to gather the nations, that I may aſſemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for the earth ſhall be devoured with the fire of my jealouſy, And then I will turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to ſerve him with one conſent.* They ſhall have not only a pure language; but alſo they ſhall have a pure goſpel, pure ordinances, and pure hearts. *He will bring them back again from their diſperſions, or ſcatterings, and that from beyond the river of Egypt, my ſupplicants, even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offering.* He tells, He will bring back all the ſcattered and baniſhed, and many more to them. And then he tells them, *He will pardon all their ſins; and they ſhall not be aſhamed of all their doings, wherein they have tranſgreſſed againſt him;* and he will take away all their reproach; for he will take away out of the midſt of thee, *them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou ſhalt no more be haughty becauſe of my holy mountain.* Theſe that boaſted of their privileges, and took liberty therefrom to ſin, he tells them, He will firſt take them away, ere all this ſhould be accompliſhed, and they ſhould be greatly waſted, and yet there ſhall be a remnant left.

Now, we will come back, and obſerve ſome leſſons for our inſtruction: *Therefore wait ye upon me, ſaith the Lord.* Whence we would obſerve.

1. That ſuch is the Lord's love to, and care of his people and followers that are deſiring to keep faithfully by him, under their trials and chaſtiſements, as that he allows them great matter of comfort, leſt their heart ſhould be troubled and caſt down: This is evident from Iſaiah xl. 1. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God.* And this he brings in as an encouragement unto them, that when he brings judgments and ſtrokes upon a land, he will not leave them without comfort: Alſo, Iſaiah xxvii. 7. *hath he ſmitten him, as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him?*

2. Obſerve, That when the Lord hath a glorious piece of work to produce, or bring forth, he caſts all the metal into the furnace together, that he may at once ſcum off the droſs and refine the metal and make it the purer: Ye may ſee this clear in theſe words, *That he may turn to the people a pure language, he will gather the nations, and aſſemble the kingdoms, that he may pour out upon them the fierceneſs of his anger.*

Now, ye have their firſt caſe, and then their duty: As for their caſe, they were ſadly chaſtiſed by the Chaldeans, that ruled over them: And as for their duty, they were to *wait upon the Lord;* So learn, that when the rod is afflicting his people, by the hand of the wicked, then he calls his people to wait upon him. O happy people, that the Lord chaſeth in to the Lord! But all the rods have had the contrary effect to this day.

3. Obſerve, That the certainty of the Lord's pouring his indignation on his enemies ſhould encourage his people to wait on him: "For my determination is to gather the nations, "and aſſemble the kingdoms; that I may pour upon them "the fierceneſs of mine anger, *&c.*" Seeing then that judgments on enemies are certain; therefore let this move and ſtir you up to wait upon him. This ought to be your work now, when he is gathering papiſts and malignants, and all the enemies together, that he may pour out his anger upon them; therefore your duty is to wait upon him; for it will have an uncouth aſpect even to them, that he is coming to deliver them. In the original the words read. *Then will I make the people a pure language.*

4. Obſerve, That the Lord ordinarily makes uſe of judgments, as a furthering of mercies to his people: *Then will I turn to the people a pure language,* pure worſhip, and pure doctrine, and pure ordinances; and people ſhall be of pure hearts, to ſerve the Lord with one conſent.

5. Obſerve, That although the Lord's coming be oft in a terrible manner, though in mercy to his people, yet is is often miſtaken by his people; and ſo he muſt put them in mind, and tell it before-hand to wait upon him. And that other tranſlation hath it: *He will turn to the people of a pure language,* ſo, theſe whom the Lord makes choice of, to come to them with mercy and judgment, are theſe who are of a pure language. Do not think that he will come to them that are ſpeaking the abominable language of Aſhdod: No; it is to them of a pure language that he will come in mercy, when *he pours out his indignation on his enemies, that they may all ſerve him with one conſent.*

6. Obſerve, That it is an heartſome and thriving like thing, where there is a mutual exhorting and exciting one of another, and a hearty conſenting to ſerve the Lord; when there ſhall be no debates among his people. O! how deſirable is that, to ſee the church of Chriſt unite together in him, who is their head, all ſerving the Lord with one conſent, when theſe ſhall ſpeak the language of Canaan, and every one ſtirring up another to ſerve the Lord with one conſent? *From beyond the rivers, my ſupplicants, even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offering.* Now, the godly had ſome-

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thing to object here, How ſhall all this be performed, ſeeing we are a ſcattered and diſperſed people, and borne down? And here the Lord anſwers it, *from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my ſuppliants ſhall come.* He will bring back the diſperſed, and gather home the baniſhed, that they may ſerve him in their own land, with one conſent.

7. Obſerve, That when the Lord hath a mind to deliver his people, and bring back their captivity, neither the low nor deſpicable caſe that his people may be in, nor yet the ſtrength and cruelty of their enemies, ſhall be able to hinder, or ſtop the work in the Lord's hand: For he will bring back their captivity; for ſtrong is the Lord that redeemeth them; and they ſhall bring back many with them. The enemies of our Lord ſhall gain no advantage, by baniſhing the Lord's people; for inſtead of diminiſhing his kingdom thereby, this is the way that the Lord hath taken for the enlarging of his Son's kingdom. And why is it thus this day, that the Lord hath ſuffered the fury of his enemies thus to baniſh away the Lord's people? They think thereby to waſte and deſtroy utterly the ſeed of Iſrael: But we believe the Lord hath other thoughts of it: He will thereby ſow his ſeed among the heathen and ſtrangers, that there may be more gathered in, to take part with the poor church of Chriſt. Therefore let not friends be diſcouraged upon this account, although this be our caſe this day, for this is the high way to enlarge the borders of his Son's kingdom, and to make his power to be the more known among the heathen.

8 Obſerve, That the effects of his returning will be known by this, when the heart of his people ſhall be lifted up, in aſcribing praiſe and glory to him: Then his people that have been baniſhed ſhall return with ſongs of praiſe in their mouths. *The daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offering.* And the hearts of his people ſhall be lifted up, with the mutual love of one another, and ſhall all ſerve him with one conſent. What a ſweet day think ye will this be to the church of Chriſt? And though this promiſe was partly accompliſhed at the returning of the people from Babylon, yet it is alſo applicable to the church under the New Teſtament, that ſhall be in the like caſe they were in. It ſhall then be ſung of the poor church in Britain and Ireland, when our Lord ſhall bring again, and return our captivity, *Not unto us, not unto us, but to the Lord be the glory.* He tells them that they ſhould not be aſhamed for all their former miſcarriages and miſbehaviour; for he will freely pardon all their iniquity.

9. Obſerve, That this will not only be a great mercy to the people of God, but alſo a delivery from the guilt of ſin and power of Satan. O! for this delivery from the guilt of ſin, and the power of Satan; For then it would be, *Thus ſaith the Lord,*

Lord, Thou ſhalt no more be called deſolate, nor a city forſaken; but the Lord thy God ſhall lead thee by the fountains of living water, &c. For, as we ſaid, Nothing ſhall ſtand in his way; for ſtrong is the Lord that executeth judgment for her. So that as the Lord, for their encouragement and removing their objection out of the way, that they were a ſcattered and downborne people, and in no caſe that looked like a delivery; ſo alſo, he removed that objection, that they were a ſinful people; here he anſwers that, and tells them, *That he would pardon all their iniquities: And ſo they ſhould not be aſhamed of their former ways.* And then the Lord tells them, *That he will take away them that rejoice in their pride, and they ſhall no more be haughty becauſe of my holy mountain.* Where we would

10. Obſerve, That ere the Lord bring about delivery to his church, he will make a diſcovery of formaliſts, hypocrites, &c. *He will take away them that rejoice in their pride; and thou ſhalt no more be haughty becauſe of my holy mountain.* Them that boaſted of their privileges, and thereby took liberty to ſin the more, he tells them, that he behoved to take them out of the way. What may we then ſay of many, that gloried in the privileges of Scotland, who are now turned out of the way, and are taking more liberty to ſin? Here the Lord tells, that he will take ſuch out of the way, before he deliver his people. And leſt the church ſhould ſay, that if this be done, and all theſe be taken out of the way, there will be none left. But here the Lord anſwers this objection, and tells them, That a remnant ſhall be left behind, and that he will be glorioufly ſeen in their delivery.

11. Obſerve, That though the judgment or ſtroke be univerſal, that the Lord may bring on a church or people, yet he hath ſaid it, *That he will ſpare a remnant. Though I make a full end of all nations, yet I will not make an end of thee; but will leave in the midſt of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they ſhall truſt in the name of the Lord.* O! be not diſcouraged, afraid, or caſt down, becauſe of the cruelty of the enemy, and the ſeeming victory that they have over the poor church of Chriſt this day: Do not foſter that fear, that they ſhall get them all rooted out; for ye ſee the faithfulneſs of God is engaged, to kept a remnant in the hotteſt of trials and ſufferings.

12. Obſerve, That he tells them, That he will denude and empty them of all their privileges, that they may be brought to truſt in himſelf: *they ſhall be no more haughty, becauſe of my holy mountain.* Now, let us not diſpone of our own caſe this day, but let us rather hope and rejoice in it, ſeeing that he uſeth to take this way in delivering his people. Wherefore

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hath he brought us to this paſs, to be ſo low, but that we may put our truſt in him, that hath everlaſting ſtrength? He will have us to be poor in our own eyes, and poor in the world's eyes, and deſpair as to help in ourſelves, that we may rely on him for ſtrength.

13. Obſerve, that he will not only pardon their ſins, and give them grace, but he will give them preventing grace: They ſhall ſtudy holineſs and tenderneſs, and ſhall truſt in the name of the Lord, and they thereby ſhall prove themſelves to be his remnant; and they ſhall have his image ſtamped upon them.

14. Obſerve, That the Lord hath engaged himſelf by promiſe, that he will help them to do all that he requires of them: *And the remnant ſhall do no iniquity.*

15. Obſerve, That he tells them, that it is them that truſt in him, that all this is promiſed unto; there be none that can do any thing to purpoſe, but they that believe in him. Who is it that ſhall be helped thus to ſtand, when many ſhall fall on both ſides? And who is it that ſhall do no iniquity? It is only they that believe and truſt in him. But leſt ſome of you miſtake us in this, it is not here promiſed, that they ſhall be perfect, and ſhall not ſin at all; but the meaning is this, they ſhall not ſin wittingly, and willingly, purpoſedly, or delightſomely.

16. Obſerve, That the Lord's removing of enemies out of the way, is to make way for great mercies to his friends; and that likewiſe his people ſhall be helped and guided to improve mercies, and ſhall ſtudy holineſs, when God ſhall pour down wrath upon his enemies. Oh! how unlike we are to this at this day! For there is a ſpirit of lying gone forth, that they who turn out of the way defend themſelves by, when they draw in and comply with enemies, but the remnant of Iſrael ſhall not ſpeak lies; he will keep his remnant in good caſe: For, *they ſhall feed and ly down, and none ſhall make them afraid.* This is the reaſon, he will protect and defend them from enemies.

And laſtly, The effects that both the mercies beſtowed, and theſe which he hath promiſed to beſtow, ſhould make his people ſet to the ſtudy of holineſs. And who is there among you all now, that can ſay but ye have met with much of his kindneſs? Therefore ſtudy to improve it, ſtudy faith and holineſs, and to get the exerciſe of faith kept up. He will bring judgments upon enemies, that he may turn to his church, and to the people a pure language. And, O! happy is the man or woman, that is preparing to meet with him, and is ſtudying to keep his way.

SERMON

SERMON XXVI.

HABAKKUK ii. 3, 4.

For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie: Though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry. Behold his ſoul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: But the juſt ſhall live by his faith.

PROUD conceited man is ready, ſinfully, to quarrel againſt the Lord's way of ordering his affairs. I believe there is ſo much atheiſm in your hearts, that ye think, if ye had matters in your own hand, and in your own guiding, you would manage them better than they are. O proud blaſphemy! to ſee the potſherds of the earth quarrel with their Maker. Although he be the *high and lofty one that inhabits eternity*, and hath the clouds under his feet, and who hath the treaſures of wiſdom by him, and dwells in the light inacceſſible: Though his faithfulneſs be engaged, that he will order all well for his own glory, and his peoples good, yet, *the viſion is for an appointed time, though it tarry, in the end he will make it ſpeak, and it will not lie;* and he hath commanded his people to wait for it. The prophet Habakkuk was greatly plagued with temptations and confuſions in his mind, anent the Lord's returning. In the firſt and ſecond chapters, he uſeth means to prevent theſe confuſions: What does he? ſaith he, *I will go and ſtand upon my watch-tower.* He would not lie ſtill under diſcouragements and temptations that aſſaulted him; but got him up to his watch tower: What way got he up to his watch-tower? It was by prayer and ſupplication, and by getting his heart ſet on God. And what got he when he was there? He got a diſcovery, from the Lord, as the anſwer of his prayer; he got the viſion diſcovered, and he is commanded to write it in great letters, that they may run that read it. This viſion was concerning the delivery of his church again, which we may conclude from that the charge which he got, to write his viſion; it was, that thereby his people's hearts might be ſtrengthened in their feet to wait. It ſeems it was uſed by the prophets then, to write all their commiſſions on tables, and to ſet them at the entering of the gate of the temple, that all might ſee and read them: Then we ſee, the Lord's word ſhould not be concealed, but publiſhed faithfully by his ſervants, and divided aright and made plain.

Now,

Now, there are theſe two things in the words read. There is the promiſe of the return, and there is the reaſon given of his delaying the viſion. The reaſon why it was to be written, becauſe the time of the accompliſhment was not yet come: *It is for an appointed time.* And if it were aſked, why he delays the viſion? The reaſon is given in the fourth verſe, that he may diſcover the proud hypocrites and alſo that the ſincerity of his people might be tried. *The juſt ſhall live by his faith.* This for the meaning of the words; and ſo I ſhall lay down this doctrine:

Doct. I. *That the mercy promiſed to the Lord's people, and the threatnings to his enemies, the timing of them, is in his own hand.* See Dan. xii. 4. *Shut up the words, and ſeal the book, even to the time of the end;* Deut. xxxii 34 *Is not this laid up in ſtore with me, and ſealed among my treaſures.* So, as a part of his ſovereignty, he orders and times mercies and judgments.

It is like, if vengeance had been in our hands, that enemies had felt it ere now: But the Lord knows beſt how to time mercies and judgments. It may be, that there were many, who thought that the viſion ſhould have ſpoken, and been accompliſhed at Bothwell; and ſince they were diſappointed of their expectation, they have caſt off their waiting for the Lord any longer, and are ready to ſay, *This evil is of the Lord, why ſhould we wait any longer for him?* yet, *the viſion is for an appointed time*, and not a minute ſhall it be delayed longer, than that time he hath ſet to be accompliſhed. There be many that ſpeak of the viſion now, that will forget it when it comes, for it ſhall ſpeak in a ſtrange language; it will make the deceits and hypocriſies of many to be diſcovered, therefore wait for it.

We would give you an uſe of advice. Seeing the viſion is certain, then be comforted. Ye that can be comforted with no other thing, comfort yourſelves with the hope of this, that the Lord will return again to his church, oppoſe him who will; for the delaying of his appearing takes not away the certainty of it: Though it be for an appointed time, yet it will both come and ſpeak. Though we would have the viſion ſpeaking, yet there is much oppoſition in the way; there is a wicked, powerful, and malignant enemy in the way; but there is no oppoſition but what he hath promiſed, and can ſoon remove, Iſa. xl. 6. *The voice ſaid, Cry, And he ſaid, What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field.* Therefore enemies, though they were never ſo many, and though they were never ſo ſtrong, yet they are but like a meadow or corn field, for God to thruſt in his ſickle, and the more rank it be, it ſhall cut the more ſweetly. Therefore do not think that theſe aſſociations of papiſts,

malignants, and multitudes of ſoldiers ſhall be able to ſtand before him; for they are but like graſs before his ſickle. But ye will ſay, There is great oppoſition in the way, *viz.* ſin that ſtands in the way. Indeed that is true, that is the greateſt impediment, but yet he hath promiſed that he will come over that alſo; as in Iſa. xl. 2. *Speak ye comfortable to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned.* The Lord's mercy is ſuch, that he will not let ſin ſtand in the way, when he comes to deliver his people, this ſhould make us wait patiently, to get the promiſed mercy out of his own hand, now while he is in ſpeaking terms with us. What will ye do? Will ye not receive this mercy that he hath promiſed? He hath promiſed to pardon our ſins, if we will but come and receive the mercy off his hand. What ſhall we liken the church of Scotland to, but to a woman who hath left her huſband, and followed paramours, and yet the Lord is content to take her home again? And is not this his language to us this day, *Thou haſt played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, ſaith the Lord.* Therefore, I ſay, if ye will come over the mountains of your doubts and miſbelievings, mercy will come over the mountains of ſin. But ye will ſay, What will we do with our doubts, to get them removed, when all things look ſo impoſſible like? Ye muſt labour to come over your doubts and grip to the Lord by faith. This was the way that Abraham took, when he was commanded to ſacrifice his ſon. But I will tell you, there is little preparation of heart ſtudied, to meet the Lord in that day. Study to be prepared, for there is great need to be fixed in the faith, that ye be not ſhaken; for it will be both a coſtly delivery, and a humbling delivery: It will overcome this laſt and great oppoſition, *viz.* ſin in his people. O! but he be much to be admired by all that love him, that rides ſo triumphantly in the chariot of free grace. There be many that will not wait till his time come, but make a ſinful haſting from under the croſs, that think, that the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious, and think alſo that he hath forgotten to puniſh enemies; but, remember the damnation of the wicked ſlumbers not, but the longer that the judgment be deferred, it will be the ſadder and ſorer when it comes; for it hath a time appointed, when the viſion ſhall ſpeak and not lie. Therefore labour to build upon the faith of this, That he will appear, and make the viſion to ſpeak. Enemies ſay, He doth not regard the prayers of his people, and that he denies to appear for them; therefore, they go on in perſecuting the people of God; and yet though they do ſo, and though ſuch as run to their camp for ſafety ſay by their practice, That the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious, and denies his help to his people; and we believe that this is

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a great reaſon, that ſo many run and aſſociate themſelves with the wicked party, and give bonds, and pay fines to them, and ſo ſeek their preſervation and ſafety from thoſe, that are in open war againſt God; for, if this were believed, that the Lord is haſting on his way, and that the viſion ſhall ſpeak, and its language will be terrible to all that are without mercy's compaſs: Although theſe that have drawn their hand back from the work of the Lord this day, ſay by their practice, That he hath forgotten to be gracious, and denies to help his people; not a few miniſters and profeſſors declare, by their practice, That they do not believe that the Lord is ſo concerned about his church. So then, the time ſhall not be delayed, when the time that he hath ſet is come, when he will build up Zion again. O believe it, that the viſion will ſpeak, and its language will be heard by all:

DOCT. II. *Although that we do not miſbelieve altogether; yet we are ready to give much ear to ſenſe, and forget the exerciſe of faith: But if we would be helped to carry rightly, we muſt not let ſenſe have a hand in cenſuring of God, under the delays of his returning. Here ſenſe ſaith that he will tarry, and faith ſaith that he will come.*

This point is clear, Hab. i. 13. as to what the language of ſenſe is, "Wherefore looketh thou upon them that deal treacherouſly, and holdeſt thy tongue, when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" That was ſtrange! and ſenſe ſays, in the foregoing part of the verſe, how can it be, that *he is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*, and thus to ſhine upon the ways of the wicked? Therefore ſenſe ſays, that "he hath utterly caſt off, and that "he will be gracious no more:" And faith ſay, that "his "faithfulneſs fails not to all generations." But ye will ſay, how doth faith help itſelf againſt ſenſe? I will tell you, Faith helps itſelf againſt ſenſe by theſe things.

1. It conſiders and takes a look of the ſovereignty of God, Matth. xx. 15. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will "with mine own?" Faith knows all this, that he is Lord of all, and keeps ſilent, knowing that the viſion will certainly come at the time appointed.

2. Faith helps itſelf againſt ſenſe, by conſidering the wiſdom that is in God, and as he believes that infinite wiſdom and knowledge is with God, ſo that alſo his faithfulneſs obliges him to come; and by his infinite wiſdom he knows well how to time his coming, and therefore faith is helped to keep ſilent.

3. Faith helps itſelf, by the love that God hath manifeſted to his people, ſo that he will not forget them. Senſe ſaith, He afflicts and chaſtens ſore. But faith ſays, His wounds are like oil; and thereby is helped to conſtruct favourably of all his diſpenſations.

4. Faith helps itſelf by conſidering the purpoſe and end, wherefore he delays his coming; as the people of Iſrael, they muſt compaſs the mountains in the wilderneſs forty years: And wherefore was it? The cup of the Amorites was not yet full: And ſo the reaſon of his delaying is, becauſe he will have a diſcovery of the graces of his people, and of the hypocriſy of many formaliſts; and he will have the cup of enemies full.

5. Faith helps itſelf by this, conſidering that the Lord's performances are not out of date, but his time is ſeaſonable: It is true, if matter were paſt recovery, ſenſe might have a great advantage, and faith little ground to wait for him; but it is otherwiſe, his performances cannot be out of date. If ſenſe had its deſire, and matters going as it would have them, the viſion had been diſcovered long ere now: But faith conſiders the neceſſity of this delay, by the diſcovery that he hath made, and is making; ſo that if his coming had been ſooner than the time that he hath ſet, it had been unſeaſonable. Senſe ſays, We are without help this day, and little ground to wait for better, ſeeing that enemies are multiplying and increaſing every day, and his people are waſted and diminiſhed by the cruelty of enemies, by baniſhment and death: But faith believes that the Lord can raiſe up children to Abraham out of the very ſtones; and then it believes alſo, that when he comes back he will make up all their loſſes; as ye may ſee in Joel ii. 25 *And I will reſtore to you the years that the locuſt hath eaten, the canker worm, and the catterpillar, and the palmer-worm, my great army which I ſent among you.* So that whatever are your complaints, he will make up all the loſſes, when he comes.

6. Faith helps itſelf by conſidering, that there is enough in God to bear up his people at his appearing; Ye will ſee this confirmed in Iſa. xl. 31 "But they that wait upon the Lord "ſhall renew their ſtrength: They ſhall mount up with wings "as eagles, they ſhall run and not be weary, and they ſhall "walk and not faint." Faith believes that the trial cannot be ſuch, but that he will bear them up in it.

DOCT. III. Is *the certainty of the Lord's appearing for his people, and againſt his enemies.*

This furniſheth encouragement for his people to wait, "the "viſion ſhall ſpeak." And that certainly; then the encouragement is enjoined, wait for it: Eſtabliſh your heart in the faith of it, and ye ſhall find that afford encouragement to wait upon him. Ye ſee what a great help this was to the church, when in a low condition, Micah vii. 7. "I will wait for the "God of my ſalvation: My God will hear me. Ver. 9. until "he plead my cauſe; and execute judgment for me." And Iſaiah viii. 17. "I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his

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"face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him." The church there believed that he would help her, and ſo ſhe reſolves to wait for him. O ſirs! believe this, that the people who have turned out of the way of God this day, have known nothing of the exerciſe of believing and waiting. But ye will ſtart this queſtion: How ſhall we wait for the viſion until it ſpeak? I anſwer, if ye would wait aright.

1. Ye muſt wait patiently: Ye ſee this ought to be joined with on-waiting, Pſalm xxxvii. 7. "Reſt in the Lord, and "wait patiently for him." Verſe 6. "Commit thy way unto "the Lord, truſt alſo in him, and he ſhall bring to paſs." I ſay, There cannot be waiting without patience: Therefore when ye find your hearts quarrelling, and riſing up againſt the diſpenſations of God, ye ſhould riſe up in oppoſition againſt them; for theſe heart riſings are from the devil. O! do not murmer againſt this way of dealing; for this will make you weary, and turn your eyes back to Egypt again.

2. Ye muſt wait ſubmiſſively; as it is in Micah vii. 9. "I "will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſin-"ned againſt him." Ye muſt wait with ſubmiſſion, and put a blank in his hand, concerning the date of his coming. Beware of encroaching on his ſovereignty. "I will bear the "indignation of the Lord," ſo ye muſt wait ſubmiſſively.

3. Ye muſt wait believingly; for this is right waiting, as is alſo clear, from Micah vii. 9. "I will bear the indignation "of the Lord, until he plead my cauſe: And then, "he "will bring me forth to the light, and I ſhall behold his righ-"teouſneſs." The church believed that her enemies, who then triumphed, ſhould be trampled upon, and it was ſeen by her faith: So the certainty of the thing waited for, when believed will beget patience, and will render the waiter yet patient, though it be delayed.

4. Ye muſt wait for it, in the way of duty, Iſa. xxvi. 8. "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we wait-"ed for thee." Ye muſt wait in the way of duty, both in reſpect of judgments and mercies. Theſe that wait not this way, they will not wait long: And the viſion, when it comes, will ſpeak no good to them, but it will have a ſad language unto them, that are waiting, and not in the way of duty, but are joining in all the ſinful abominations of theſe times; and are joining iſſue and intereſt with the avowed declared enemies of God. What ſays the prophet Iſaiah to ſuch? "He "ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed," Iſa. lxvi. 5. There are many, that are reproaching us in Scotland this day for our duty; but remember, and believe it, the mouths of the reproachers ſhall be ſtopped, when he comes back again, whether they be miniſters or profeſſors. Altho' the language of many hath been, as when the children of

Iſrael

Iſrael cried in the wilderneſs, that it was better for them to turn back again into Egypt; and this the Lord will charge many miniſters and profeſſors with; that did ſeem to run well a while, but have ſoon been hindred. O! beware of turning aſide, ſirs, out of his way; for if ye do, the viſion will ſpeak wrath and indignation to you. But if ye would have the viſion ſpeaking comfortably to you, then ye muſt perſevere in his way, If ye would have it to be a day of light and not of darkneſs, wait on in the way of duty. But I fear ſadly that there are many of you, that if the trial come ſharply to your door, ye will draw back ſhamefully. But ſuch as would have the viſion ſpeaking good to them, they muſt wait for it in the way of duty, and muſt perſevere in waiting. O! if this day we could get you all perſuaded to this duty. How ſhall we perſevere, ſay ye? Anſwer,

(1.) Conſider that it is a commanded duty: The apoſtle Paul commands and charges the Corinthians, *ſo to run, that they might obtain*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. They that are running in a race ought not to ſit down, if running for a great prize. It may be, that ye will think this but a feckleſs help, to tell you that it is a commanded duty; but I will tell you, The conſideration of duty, will help the ſoul to wait, and wait patiently.

(2.) To help you to perſevere, labour to count the coſt of your duty; there be many that are never come this length, to count the coſt of their religion; and, how can ſuch wait? I fear there be many here who have not counted this day's work, what it may coſt them. O! If ye would be helped to perſevere in waiting, count the coſt of your duties better, leſt happily after ye have begun, and put to your hand, ye be not able to finiſh.

(3.) To help you to perſevere, conſider that the mercy promiſed, and that which you are called to wait for, is ſealed by the blood of Chriſt, and ſo it is ſure. O! if we could perſuade you from this, that the inheritance is ſure; for he is a great King that hath promiſed; one that cannot lie: He hath engaged his honour in pawn, and ſo undoubtedly it is ſure.

(4.) To help you to perſevere, conſider that the out-gate ſhall be ſeaſonable, and the beſt of things ſhall be given you in the beſt of ſeaſons, when in your loweſt condition, and in your greateſt need. If ye would ſet about the exerciſe of theſe things, they would help you to perſevere, and ye would not be ſo ready to draw back, and deny him and his ways; neither would ye be ſo ready to miſconſtruct and quarrel him. Therefore wait on the viſion patiently and ſubmiſſively, and perſevere in the way of duty: And the Lord give you ſtrength ſo to do. I ſhall ſay no more.

SERMON

SERMON XXVII.

HABAKKUK ii. 3, 4.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: Though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: But the just shall live by his faith.

THE Lord is a most wise manager of his affairs: a glimpse of the wisdom that is to be seen in him, would make us cry out, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to carry the government. A sight of his wisdom in all his dispensations, would make us join to our note, with that heavenly company in the Revelation that was represented to John. *And I looked,* (said he) *and behold a great company that no man could number;* and what were they all saying? *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and is alive, to receive all riches and power and glory, and dominion, for ever and ever.* But to come to our purpose, The Lord's wisdom is much to be seen in his delaying of his people's delivery. But ye will say, What way is his wisdom seen therein? Even in this, that he will have many to be discovered; he will have the hypocrisy and formality of many to be discovered; and he will have the sincerity of his people also tried likewise; and therefore there is much of his wisdom seen in delaying of the vision.

You know the last occasion in the forenoon, we told you two reasons of the words: 1. That the prophet got the vision revealed to him, that it should speak. 2. That it should be delayed that the discovery of the hypocrisy of some might be made manifest. And we come to the second thing proposed in the words; that is, to justify the Lord in delaying of the vision. Where we would observe,

1. When the Lord delays the delivery of his people, that thereby he finds out much unsoundness and hypocrisy, by the delaying of the vision, that could not otherwise be discovered. Why? Because the hypocrite will run well for a while, as long as wind and tide serves him: But when that he sends a storm upon the churches face, this tries and discovers the unsoundness of many: So that there are many looking back to Egypt this day, who sometime were very forward in building the Lord's house; and by the Lord's counting the trial, he hath found out much, that otherwise could never have been dis-

diſcovered. O what of his wiſdom ſhines forth here! But it may be, that ſome will ſay, What is the matter what had come of us, and what we had ſuffered, if he had appeared for our deliverance; for there is no probable way that we can ſee for his coming. But I will tell you, That is not the language of faith; for the delay thereof is much better, ſeeing there is ſo much that he hath diſcovered, and more yet that he hath to diſcover; and the delaying of his appearance is for this end. O! there are many things that ſpeak out, That the viſion ſhall not be delayed long. But, O! how unlikely a people are we to be delivered? And remember this, That the trial ſhall come more particularly to your doors, and ye ſhall be ſearched and found out what your reſpects to him are. But ſome of you will ſay, He hath brought that already in your way: But I will tell you, It ſhall come more univerſally, and more particularly to every man's door; and there will be ſad diſcoveries among us ere all be done. There are many come here under the vail of love to Chriſt, that he will diſcover that their goodneſs hath been like the morning cloud, and the early dew that ſoon paſſeth away. What are all the profeſſors, for the moſt part, for all the ſufferings that are come, but a ſhadow, and know little what is the ſubſtance of religion? Your countenance this day, gives us ſad ground of fear, that there are many of you that know little or nothing of God; there is ſo little of the impreſſion of the duty of the day and of the work of it ſeen upon your ſpirits; which gives us ſad ground to fear this: Therefore let me lay home this advice by way of exhortation, to your doors particularly. Seeing that it is ſuch a trying time, and that the end of the Lord's delaying the viſion is for theſe two forementioned reaſons. Therefore it concerns you to try yourſelves, ſeeing that there is a behold annexed to it, that *his ſoul which is lifted up is not right in him: But the juſt ſhall live by his faith.* Remember therefore, that the Lord's eye is always upon you, yet in a more ſpecial manner, when he hath brought you to the furnace to melt you, ſeeing he ſits at the furnace as a refiner, and that he eyes the metal, and he eyes the droſs likewiſe. O look to yourſelves, how ye will come forth ſeeing that ye are put into this furnace! O wretched man or woman, that is put in a gilded hypocrite, and comes out all droſs! I would give you this advice therefore, to guard againſt defection, and falling from the way of God, that many are drawn into, ſeeing this is the ſin of our time, and therefore ought to be guarded againſt, ſeeing the unſoundneſs of the profeſſion of many hath occaſioned them to be intangled in the ſnare: Remember this, when people ſtudy not to walk with God, that they are eaſily turned aſide;

ſtudy

ſtudy love and ſincerity to him, for where this is wanting, he gives many up to inevitable ſinning. And upon the other hand, where God is eyed in all the tract of a man's life, the croſs will produce the right effect. But, alas! the contrary is ſeen in many, it hath chaſed many away from God, and the reaſon is, becauſe they obſerve always the affliction, and conſiders not the cauſe thereof.

The ſecond doctrine that we would obſerve is this,

DOCT. 2. *That a quarrelling temper, becauſe of his delaying, will ſoon make apoſtacy.*

This is clear, from Heb. x. 38. *Now the juſt ſhall live by faith, but if any man draw back my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.* He tells who is the man that ſhall make defection, the man that draweth back: Ye know that drawing back is the fruit of quarrelling. O! remember this, therefore, if ye be of this temper, that ye will not ſtand to your profeſſion; ye will ſoon fall into temptations, if ye be of a proud temper, and a quarrelling temper, becauſe of the delaying of the delivery.

Therefore let me lay home this doctrine by way of uſe, to theſe that have denied their allegiance to Chriſt, in joining with his enemies, by ceſs and locality, and fines paying; and in being enſnared by compearing before enemies courts; let me exhort you by this to try your temper and frame; for ye will find it to be a quarrelling temper, and that your hearts have not been right with God, otherwiſe ye had been more ſubmiſſive, waiting and depending upon him; for why was it that ye fell into ſuch courſes? ye will all ſay, That ye ſaw not the ſin of it: But if ye will ſuffer me, I will tell you the truth, it is, ye know not what it was to depend on God by faith: The life of faith hath not been ſtudied by you, and will ye conſider, that by theſe ways that ye have taken, ye wreathe the yoke more upon your necks, to be keeped under the yoke; remember then, if ye will quit theſe iniquitous courſes and turn unto him with unfeigned purpoſes and reſolutions, to bide by him he hath promiſed that he will have compaſſion upon ſuch, as are ignorant and out of the way.

The third doctrine that we would obſerve is this.

DOCT. 3. *The juſt ſhall live by his faith.*

And from it obſerve, that when the Lord delays his appearing for his people, that as he finds out much hypocriſy in many, yet he leaves a remnant that ſhall live by faith. When there is a deſolation ſpoken of by the prophet Iſaiah, it is ſaid, Iſa. vi. 13. "But yet in it ſhall be a tenth, and it "ſhall return, and ſhall be eaten as a teil-tree, and as an "oak whoſe ſubſtance is in them, when they caſt their leaves: "So that the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof." A tenth part ſhall be left, that all the judgments and ſtrokes

ſhall not bring to droſs. There is ſome that he perſeveres to be the ſeed or ſubſtance, that ſhall have the ſap of the truth of the goſpel in their hearts, as the oak hath the ſap in its root. But before I apply this, I would lay down another doctrine.

The fourth doctrine then is this.

Doct. 4. *That none can apply this to themſelves, but theſe that have faith in Chriſt.*

Paul knew this well enough, when he tells the Epheſians, that it was by grace they were ſaved, through faith, Epheſ. ii. 8. And ſhews the Romans, that *by the deeds of the law, no fleſh could be juſtified*, Rom. iii. 20. And ſo there muſt be an union with Chriſt by faith, ere ye win to improve either mercy or judgment for your advantage; for, it is even with the Chriſtian, as it is with the men upon the earth, in their contracts of marriage, that there is none that hath a right to what the other poſſeſſeth, till once the marriage be conſumate. Then let me lay this home upon you; Since it is ſo, that ſome ſhall be found to have grace, and that theſe have this ſap in them, and ſo they are accounted righteous in the ſight of God: Then let me invite you to come and take Chriſt: O come and ye ſhall be welcome to him! would ye have a pleaſant life and a deſirable life? O then, come to Chriſt! Let this offer be embraced, by theſe that are upſitten profeſſors; and let not this call be delayed or ſlighted, that Chriſt is inviting backſliders to return to him, yet that the Lord hath diſcovered your droſs, in the ſight of the world. O come to him and ſeek love and ſeek ſincerity of heart from him!

But there be many that may object, and have this excuſe, and ſay, Chriſt is a matchleſs Perſon for beauty and excellency; and withal he is matchleſs holy; and I am but a poor worm and cannot come to him. It is juſt like a prince wooing a poor woman clothed in rags, and when ſhe gets the news ſhe cannot embrace them nor come to him, ſhe is ſo unlike him: But when once the marriage day is over, and he hath given her his jewels, ſhe then reſembles him. O then! will ye come to Chriſt and let not this be your excuſe, but come, he will make no obſtacles of his mercy; therefore, come over all your jealouſies; for he is willing to clothe you with change of raiment, and to take away your filthy rags: Therefore let me leave this with you, with this charge, remember that Chriſt is offered to you to-day, therefore, if ye refuſe him, look how ye will anſwer him at the great day.

And now I will tell you what a life it is that the juſt live by faith in a day of trial.

They live by grace, and hereby are they accounted righteous; likewiſe they live in Chriſt, and under his ſhadow, *and there is no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus*, Rom. viii. 1.

viii. 1. Therefore come to Chriſt, and ye ſhall live a life without fear of condemnation.

2. They live this life by faith whereby they draw quickning grace from Chriſt. O! ſay ye, we muſt declare that we are not a people fit for him: But will ye come, and draw quickning grace from him, and this ſhall fit you for him, and ſhall help you to improve mercies, and to improve judgments.

3. They ſhall live an eſtabliſhed life; no trial can drive them off their ground: "My ſheep hear my voice, and I "know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eter- "nal life, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck "them out of my hand," John x. 27, 28 They ſhall live that noble life of ſtability in Chriſt, and ſhall be borne thro' all trials.

4. They live a myſterious life that live by faith; What a life is that ſay ye? It is a life beyond both ſenſe and reaſon; they judge not by probabilities: But although both ſenſe and reaſon ſhould ſay againſt it, yet they look to the promiſe: Senſe ſays, The viſion will not ſpeak: But faith ſays, He hath ſaid it, and it ſhall be.

5. They live a delightſome life: Can there be a more delightſome life, than faith hath to enjoy, and ſee and ſeal the truth of the promiſes made unto them.

6. They live a peaceable life in the midſt of all troubles; "for he keeps them in perfect peace, whoſe minds are ſtayed "on him," Iſa. xxvi. 3. And when "a thouſand fall at "their ſide, and ten thouſand at their right hand, it ſhall not "come near unto them," Pſalm xci. 7. So they have a life of peace, and a life of ſafety in the midſt of trouble. Are ye not longing to know what a life this is that the juſt ſhall live? To have peace and ſafety in the midſt of trouble, though the world ſhould turn up ſide down? O then! will ye come to Chriſt, and ye ſhall find this life? All the delays that he ſeems to make, ſhall not mar this life to you.

7. They live a fearleſs life: "They need not be afraid "*(ſaith he)* for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that "flyeth by day; nor for the peſtilence that walketh in dark- "neſs; nor for the deſtruction that waſteth at noon day," Pſalm xci. 5, 6. So that neither night-fears, nor day-fears will trouble them. "I will not fear *(ſays David)* though "mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea," Pſal. xlvi. 2. O ye that are of a fearful ſpirit, that the troubles of this world put in confuſion, ye know not what this life is, that the juſt live by in a time of trouble.

8. They live a ſatisfied life; and none can live that life but they: Let men ſuppoſe of all created delights unto themſelves, but they will find but poor ſatisfaction in them. He was a

wiſe man, ye know, that having ſtudied them much, put this commentary upon them, *That all was but vanity:* But the juſt have all ſatisfaction; for all delight is in him: So by their feeding on him by faith, they cannot but have a ſatisfied life then.

9. They have a flouriſhing life, and a growing life, and that is a ſweet life: For, *they get meat out of the eater, and ſweetneſs out of the ſtrong.* They are like the bee that ſucks honey out of the bittereſt of herbs; ſo the juſt that live this life of faith, have the troubles and croſſes, (that is poiſon to others) their natural and neceſſary food, that they are ſtrengthned by.

Now all theſe ways the juſt live by faith. Are ye not falling in love with this life, ye that formerly have been ſtrangers to it? O come! be intreated this day to embrace Chriſt, and ye ſhall live the life of faith all theſe ways. Come make up your union with Chriſt, and ye ſhall live by faith all theſe ways. And laſt of all.

10. To conclude, To make it a happy life, they live a life in glory. It is true, now it cannot be ſaid, They live by faith there: But none ſhall live that life of glory, but they that live by faith here, it is only they that ſhall enjoy Chriſt, the eternal wonder of all the glorified in heaven, with whom the Father's delight is, and will be for ever; they ſhall live with him, and be adorned with his robes of glory, which they ſhall receive from him, and crowns upon their heads.

O! this life would make you all miſken yourſelves. Then O! will ye come and take him, and ſuch ſhall your life be, your life ſhall be a king's life. The ſun in the noon-day is not ſo glorious, as ye ſhall be made to ſhine in the kingdom of your Father. What is it that makes it to be ſo glorious there, but becauſe Chriſt is the light of that higher houſe? The enjoyment of the Father and the bleſſed Spirit is there, and therefore I leave it on you this day, as ye deſire that life, ſee that ye put not this offer away; Otherwiſe, if ye reject him, your lives ſhall be with reprobates and damned ſpirits, thro' all the ages of eternity. I ſhall ſay no more. *Amen.*

PREFACE

PREFACE.

WHAT! have ye been preparing your hearts to come here this day, to meet with the Lord in his ordinances? I will tell you of ſome pieces of preparation, and if ye have not been ſeeking theſe, ye are not rightly prepared to come here this day:

1. Ye ſhould have been ſearching out, and mourning over your ſecret and perſonal ſins, faults and failings. O! have ye been at that exerciſe? There are many, who deſire more to mourn over the land's public ſins, than over their own private and heart ſins; and it is obſerved, that they deſire ay to do it in public.

2. Ye ſhould have been mourning over the public ſins of the land: O! ye ſhould have been mourning and lamenting over the land's ſins, and over all the wrongs done to the Lord, by his wicked and avowed enemies; and ye ſhould have been mourning for the wrongs done to him by miniſters and profeſſors.

3. Ye ſhould have come here clothed with the garments of ſincerity and ſingleneſs of heart, aiming at nothing, and ſeeking nothing but the glory of God, and the enjoyment of himſelf. Many are come here this day out of ſelf-ends, ſome out of curioſity, ſome to ſee and be ſeen, others to get a name, and ſome to get a ſmell of Chriſt's garments: But, O! if ye would come rightly, ye muſt be ſincere.

4. Ye ſhould have come here this day, having your ſouls emptied of all things, that may hinder his coming to you: The wiſdom of God ſays, That it is the hungry ſoul that he fills, but he ſends the full empty away: Theſe who come to a well with a full pitcher, cannot get it filled there. O then! if we would expect his preſence, we muſt be emptied of all things in ourſelves.

5. Ye ſhould have been rightly counting the coſt, what coming to this meeting may coſt you; to ſee if ye be willing to be killed or taken, ere ye go off the place: We may lay our account for this; but I ſay not this to fear you, but only to make you count the coſt rightly in time.

LECTURE VII.

ZEPHANIAH iii. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

14. *Sing, O daughter of Zion, ſhout O Iſrael, be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jeruſalem.*
15. *The Lord hath taken away thy judgments, he hath caſt out thine enemy: The King of Iſrael, even the Lord, is in the midſt of thee: Thou ſhalt not ſee evil any more.*
16. *In that day it ſhall be ſaid to Jeruſalem, Fear thou not; and to Zion, Let not thine hands be ſlack.*
17. *The Lord thy God in the midſt of thee is mighty; he will ſave, he will rejoice over thee with joy: He will reſt in his love, he will joy over thee with ſinging.*
18 *I will gather them that are ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſembly, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it was a burden.*
19 *Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee; and I will ſave her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out, and I will get them praiſe and fame in every land, where they have been put to ſhame.*
20. *At that time I will bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: For I will make you a name and a praiſe among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, ſaith the Lord.*

THESE who have leaſt ground of joy, have often moſt of it. The church here is bid ſing; yea, ſhout and rejoice; and that upon three accounts,

1. Becauſe the Lord would take away her ſpiritual judgments and plagues, and grant her a ſpiritual deliverence, and would pardon her ſin; and promiſes, ver. 13. *That the remnant of Iſrael ſhall not do iniquity.* That is a promiſe of ſalvation. O what ground of rejoicing is this! And, O if the Lord would give his people, in this land, ſuch a delivery, as will take away their ſpiritual plagues; as hardneſs of heart, deadneſs and unconcernedneſs! They might then ſing, rejoice, and ſhout for joy. Let us not deſire a temporal delivery without this.

2. The ſecond ground of joy, is, his caſting out of enemies, and removing them; and this is ground of rejoicing to his people indeed: And hath not his people in this land ground of joy and rejoicing upon this account, that the Lord hath removed that great enemy, Charles Stuart, off the throne, who

who was ſtanding in the way of the land's mercies: And the removal of the land's judgments?

3. Becauſe the King of Iſrael, the Lord of hoſts, is in the midſt of them. O great ground of joy indeed! His preſence makes any lot deſirable: It will make his people, even when impriſoned and tortured, to cry out, O it is good to be here! It will make them, when ſuffering and baniſhed, yea, when upon a ſcaffold, looking death in the face, cry out, O it is good to be here!

Now, who are theſe, who are bid thus to ſin and rejoice? I anſwer, None but his people, who have an intereſt in him, Iſrael and Jeruſalem; the people who are in covenant with himſelf: Therefore if we would ſing and ſhout for joy with his people, we muſt once have an intereſt in himſelf. And alſo, it is theſe who are ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſembly, verſe 18. Theſe who are rightly concerned with the Lord's fallen-down, and trampled-upon work and ordinances

Again, the Lord's people are exhorted, not to fear, neither to be ſlack-handed, that is, They are not to fear man; but to be diligent in duty; for theſe two are joined together. But Zion, the Lord's people, may object and ſay, How can I ſing and rejoice? What can I do, but fear, and be ſlack-handed, when my ſins are ſo great and many? But to anſwer this, The Lord hath ſaid in verſe 17. That he will reſt in his love; that is, he will reſt in the Son of his love, Chriſt Jeſus. And will be well pleaſed with his people for his Son's ſake, Ezek. xxxvi. 22. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, I do not this for your ſakes, O houſe of Iſrael, but for mine holy name's ſake:* And will blot out all their ſins in his blood that cleanſeth from all ſin, 1 John i. 7. Or, it may mean this, Where he once ſets his love, he will reſt there; for he doth not change.

Again they might object, What can I do but fear, and be ſlack-handed, ſeeing we are broken in pieces, and ſcattered like the dry bones, about the graves devouring mouth? But in anſwer to this, he hath promiſed to gather them that are ſorrowful for the ſolemn aſſembly: How far ſoever ye are ſcattered, yet he will gather you again.

They might yet object and ſay, Our enemies are many and great, and ſtill increaſing. But in anſwer to this, He promiſes to undo all that afflict them: And therefore, though enemies in this land be many, though papiſts, prelates, and malignants, be againſt his people, yet they may ſing and rejoice, and neither fear nor be ſlack-handed, for he will undo all that afflict them.

They might yet object and ſay, We are a poor and deſpiſed people, a poor reproached handful. So to anſwer this, he hath promiſed to rejoice over them with joy, to rejoice over them with ſinging, and to get them praiſe and fame in every land,

land, ver. 17, 19, 20. And however deſpicable, deſpiſed, and reproached his people and ſuffering remnant in this land be at this time, yet, when he comes back to Scotland, he ſhall make them to be honoured and praiſed of every one.

But they might ſtill object, (for unbelief will keep the field as long as it can) and ſay, But how ſhall we believe that all this ſhall be performed? To anſwer this, he concludes all that is here promiſed with, *Saith the Lord.* He hath ſaid it, and promiſed it, therefore it ſhall come to paſs. Hath the Lord promiſed thee any thing, then believe it: Truſt in him, for he will perform it.

SERMON XXVIII.

LUKE xii. 32.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.

THE words read may be divided into theſe four heads:

I. The people exhorted, the Lord's own diſciples, the little flock.

II. The exhortation itſelf, Fear not.

III. The ground of the exhortation, the Fathers promiſe to give them a kingdom.

IV. The motive moving him to do ſo, his own good pleaſure. Theſe I ſhall ſpeak to, in the following obſervations.

Obſerve, 1. That the followers of Chriſt are very few. They are here called a little flock: And it is ſaid, Matth. xx. 16. *Many be called, but few are choſen.* And vii. 14. *Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* And,

1. They are few in reſpect of the reſt of the world, who are not following Chriſt; although when the general aſſembly of the ſaints ſhall all meet, they will be a glorious company, yet they will be but a ſmall company, in compariſon of theſe who ſhall be on his left hand. Chriſt hath but a very thin backing this day, and the devil hath a very great backing; many, yea great multitudes, are following and wondering after the beaſt. If the world were divided into thirty-ſix parts,

parts, the thirty-ſixth part would not be found to be Chriſtians; and again, divide that thirty-ſixth part, into four parts, ye ſhould not find the fourth part thereof to be ſincere Chriſtians, and real fearers of God.

2. They are few and little in the world's eyes, and in the world's account: The church and people of God have always been, and now are, ſmall and deſpiſed in the eyes of the world; yea Chriſt himſelf, in the days of his fleſh, was deſpiſed of men, and was counted by the Jews to be little, baſe, and contemptible; and, out of diſdain, called the carpenter's ſon, Iſa. liii. 3. Matth. xiii 55. And this is one of the reproaches of the ſuffering remnant this day, That they are a poor, inſignificant handful, a few and ſmall party; but that ought to be no ground of diſcouragement, ſince Chriſt's followers have ever been deſpiſed by the world.

3. They are ſmall, and little in their own eyes, and low in their own ſight, Pſalm xxii. 6. *But I am a worm, and no man.* Doth the world then count you few and deſpiſed, and think nothing of you? Then, O my friends! be humble and low in your own eyes, and think little of yourſelves.

Obſerve 2. That the Lord's own people, his little flock, have no ground or reaſon to be afraid of any thing, *Fear not*, &c.

I ſhall therefore name a few things, which the Lord's people ſhould not fear, which yet they often fear. And,

1. They ſhould not fear man, Luke xii. 4 *Be not afraid of them that kill the body*, &c. But alas! there hath been much of this ſlaviſh fear in Scotland, and it hath cauſed many miniſters in this day, to quit and forſake the carrying of Chriſt's ſtandard, and hindred many people from following the ſame. But, O my friends, fear not man! Fear not the ſoldiers and dragoons, for the fear of them will bring you into a ſnare.

2. They ſhould not fear reproach; and this is what they are often afraid of; but, O fear not the reproach of tongues.

3. They ſhould not fear the want of proviſion for the natural life; yet this is what they are ready to fear. But, O fear not this! for, *they that ſeek the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing*, Pſalm. xxxiv. 10. Did not the Lord feed his people, while in the wilderneſs, with manna from heaven, and water out of the flinty rock? a very ſtrange and improbable way indeed. O therefore, fear not the want of this.

4. Sometimes the Lord's people fear the want of ſpiritual food for their ſouls, the want of goſpel ordinances: But they ought not to fear the want of this; for, before they want this, the Lord will give them it, and provide it for them in an extraordinary way and manner, Iſa. xli. 17, 18. *When the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none,——I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midſt of the vallies*, &c. Al-

though the Lord ſhould ſee fit to remove from you the preached goſpel, yea, and to ſuffer your enemies to take your bibles from you, yet be not diſcouraged; for he can make a portion of ſcripture, by bringing it to your mind, or a note of a ſermon which ye have heard, more ſweet and refreſhing to your ſouls, than now they are.

5. Another thing which the Lord's people ought not to fear, which yet they fear, is changes and revolutions, which fall out in the world, and in the place where they are: But they ought not to fear this, Pſal. xlvi. 2. *Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea.* In Hag. ii. 7. there is a prophecy of Chriſt, the deſire of all nations, his coming in the fleſh; and it is ſaid, that before he come, he will ſhake all nations, that is, there would be great changes and revolutions. So when Chriſt comes back again to Scotland, there will be great changes and revolutions; at his coming he will overturn many, yea, ſo to ſpeak, the very foundation of the land will be ſhaken: And we ſhould be ſo far from being afraid at this, (becauſe it will be before he come back to the land) that we ſhould pray and long for it.

Another thing that they ſhould not be afraid of, which yet they are, and that is death. O ye that are his little flock! fear not death; for, to the believing ſoul that is intereſted in Chriſt, death is unſtung. O be not afraid of death! for it will put an end to all our toilings and wanderings, and to all our miſeries and fightings. As one not unfitly ſays, "Life "is away to death, and death is away to life." O therefore, fear it not.

7. Another thing which they are ready to fear, but which they ought not to fear, is hell. O ye that are his little flock, fear not this; for Chriſt died for you, to free you from the wrath to come; therefore ye ſhould not fear any evil thing, ſeeing *neither death nor life,——nor things preſent, nor things to come, can ſeparate you from the love of God, which is in Chriſt, Jeſus our Lord,* Rom. viii. 38, 39.

Obſerve 3. That the reaſon, why the little flock of Chriſt ought not to fear, is, becauſe he hath promiſed to them a kingdom: For, *it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* Rev. i. 6. *And hath made us kings and prieſts unto God and his Father.*

And, O! who can deſcribe or ſpeak of this kingdom aright? For, as the apoſtle ſaith, 1 Cor. ii. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Summon all the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, they cannot tell you what it is: Summon all the angels, theſe glori-

glorious and glorified ſpirits, they cannot deſcribe it to you: However I ſhall give,

I. Some negative properties of this kingdom.

II. Some poſitive properties of it.

And, I. I ſhall give you ſome negative properties of this kingdom.

1. This kingdom is free of ſin: O there is no ſin there!

2. There is no care or anxiety there; no vexation for any thing there; no wicked men to perſecute, nor no devil to tempt there.

3. There is no ſorrow there becauſe of ſin, no ſorrow becauſe of trouble from the world, no ſorrow there becauſe of temptations from an ill heart and inward corruptions: For there is no ſin, nor temptations to ſin there.

4. There ſhall be nothing there, which may in the leaſt argue imperfection.

II. I ſhall give you ſome poſitive properties of this kingdom. And,

1. His people, the inhabitants of that kingdom, do enjoy the immediate preſence of God. O! doth not that make it a glorious kingdom indeed, when they ſhall enjoy the preſence of God immediately, without any cloud of deſertion! O wonderful kingdom indeed.

2. It conſiſts in the beatific viſion of God. They ſhall not only get his preſence, but ſhall ſee him as he is; they ſhall ſee him face to face. O! doth not this make it a glorious and wonderful kingdom. While his people are here, the beſt of them ſee him but darkly through the glaſs of ordinances, and that but at ſome times; but, O then! in that kingdom they ſhall ſee him face to face as he is

3. It conſiſts in a full perſuaſion of Chriſt's love to his people, and the fulneſs of their love to him again. Many times, while they are here, they are jealous of his love to them, and of their love to him as imperfect; but there they ſhall get the full ſenſe and perſuaſion of his love to them, without any doubting, and their love to him ſhall be complete.

4. It is a kingdom full of glory.

5. It is a kingdom of righteouſneſs; it is all righteouſneſs; There the ſaints ſhall be clothed with the fine white linnen, which is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt.

6. It is a kingdom of holineſs; no unclean thing can enter within the gates of the new Jeruſalem, Rev. xxi. 27. O! therefore, let us ſtudy holineſs, and deſire it more than happineſs.

7. This kingdom is a triumphant kingdom; becauſe the ſaints, who are the inhabitants thereof, are overcomers and they have palms in their hands, in token of their victory, of their full and compleate victory over all their enemies, inward

and outward, the devil, the world, and the fleſh. O they there ſing a ſweet ſong of triumph over all their enemies!

8. It is an eternal kingdom. O! this makes it glorious and wonderful; for there his people ſhall enjoy his preſence immediately to all eternity: They ſhall ſee him face to face thro' all eternity! They ſhall have the full perſuaſion of his love to them, and their perfect love to him to all eternity! They ſhall be righteous and holy as he is holy to all eternity! They ſhall ſing their ſong of triumph, and hold their palm in their hand, in token of triumph to all eternity. O then, doth not this make it a wonderful and glorious kingdom.

9. There is every thing in that kingdom that argues perfection: O! this makes it a glorious kingdom.

For *Uſe* then. Seeing it is ſo, that this kingdom is ſo glorious a kingdom, O then, my friends labour to be inhabitants there; and if ye would be inhabitants there, lay hold upon Chriſt by faith, cloſe with him, for he is the way to glory: For, without coming to him, there is no winning to glory.

Obſerve 4. That the motive moving God to give his people, the little flock, this glorious kingdom, is only his own good pleaſure: It is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom. It is nothing in them that moves him to do it; nothing but his own good pleaſure, Eph. i. 5, 6. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt to himſelf, according to the good pleaſure of his will, to the praiſe of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

And this doctrine, that the ſalvation of the elect, is only out of free grace, ſerves to reprove three ſorts of folk.

1. It reproves papiſts, who hold, "That good works me-"rit ſalvation at God's hand, and make the doers of them "acceptable in his ſight, as if it could move him to ſave "them." And if this be true, O what need was there for Chriſt's dying! yea, if it were true, he died in vain: But in oppoſition to this falſe doctrine of theirs, let us remember, that we are accepted in the beloved, and for nothing in ourſelves.

2. It reproves theſe who ſay, "That it was the foreſight "of faith in his people, which moved God to give them the "kingdom." Whereas, it was only the mere good pleaſure of his will.

3. It reproves thoſe who go about any ways to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, thinking thereby to merit ſomething from God. O let us believe this, that it is his own good pleaſure, and nothing in us, which moves him to give us the kingdom; and that we are only accepted in the beloved.

Being

Being ſtraitned for want of time, I can get no more preached; and being now to leave you, and not knowing but many of you may never have the opportunity to hear another ſermon, nor I opportunity to preach to you; therefore I would warn you of ſome things. As,

1. God is coming to Scotland with great judgments, great deſolations and ſtrokes; his people have been this long time in the wilderneſs, and now they are coming to Jordan, and it will be very deep; yea, there will be many wiles in it. But, O pray, that it may not be broad; for, if it be as broad, as it will be deep, few, yea, very few, will win through to the other ſide.

2. The aſpect and ſight of the deſolation that is coming on this land will be more terrible than the thing itſelf: The ſwellings of Jordan will be more terrible afar off, than near hand: Therefore fear not, nor faint.

3. His coming to Scotland will be ſuddenly, when leſt looked for and expected; he will come ſuddenly, and make a ſpeedy riddance of all his enemies: He will ſoon make quit of them. He will overturn many noblemen, many gentlemen, and many commons out of their habitations; and many fair houſes ſhall be waſte. The morning of that day, when he comes, will be more terrible, dark and gloomy, than the afternoon.

2*dly*, I would exhort you to ſome few things, in order to prepare you for the Lord's coming, to meet with him in the way of his righteous judgments. And,

1. Labour for an intereſt in Chriſt: Flee in to the city of refuge, where only ſhelter and ſafety is. O happy ſoul, that ſhall be found there when he comes! for there is more required, in order to a right preparation for his coming than ſtraightneſs of judgment, though that be required alſo; therefore make an intereſt in him ſure.

2. Shake off ſecurity, wherewith this generation is plagued. If I ſpeak to you of wrath and approaching judgments, ye will confeſs and aſſent to the ſame. But, O! who among you is ſtirring up yourſelves, and ſhaking off ſecurity; and preparing to meet with him. O there is ſomething coming, that will awaken you more than any thing ye have met with theſe twenty years!

3. Shake yourſelves free of hypocriſy, and labour for ſincerity and ſingleneſs of heart, aiming at nothing but the glory of God. O ſelf-ſeeking hath marred, and doth mar all the work! Therefore be ſincere.

4. Labour for humility: *Humble yourſelves under the mighty hand of God*, that ſo, in due time, he may raiſe and lift you up. O! this is much wanting among his people this day, notwithſtanding of all that he hath been inculcating to them,

to be humble, both by his word and rod. O therefore be humble!

5. Upon every new declaration of the Lord's anger againſt you and the land, ſearch out and try what are the cauſes thereof and mourn for the ſame. O ſearch out, what hath been the cauſes of the Lord's anger againſt us this long time! and what is the cauſe of this, his preſent contending; and mourn and be humbled for the ſame.

PREFACE.

SEVERAL times I have been telling you (at leaſt ſome of you) of this, and now I am forced to tell you again, That the ſharpeſt and greateſt trial that ever a generation met with, we may reſolve to meet with. There is a word ſpoken by the Lord, in Zeph. i. 12. *I will ſearch Jeruſalem with candles.* O remember this word and tremble: For, aſſuredly God will ſearch Scotland thoroughly; he will go through the breadth and length of Scotland, with a narrower ſearch and ſieve than ever a land or church met with. We think there are many who think to paſs this ſearch, whom he will take and find out: And I am certain that ſomething of this may be ſeen already; for this ſieve that God hath already brought through hath come to the door of many that did not expect it. But, O friends, I muſt tell you this, That we are a generation that are moſt unready for the things that are coming: God hath manifeſted his kindneſs largely to us, in that he hath tryſted us with ſuch moderate afflictions formerly, for the training of us up for what we have to meet with: But, alas! we are as unready this day as we were at the beginning; and they are blind who ſee not this day faſt coming: And we are very unfit for it; and there are may e-evidences of this. As,

1. The great carnality that cleaves to us ſtill, for all the pains that God hath taken on us, to have the gold and the droſs ſeparated: For will the goldſmith caſt the gold into the furnace, and melt it; and will he bring it out till the gold and the droſs be parted? So then, what need we look for, ſince all that we have met with, hath not done our turn? For, I am ſure there is as much carnality and droſs, to be

ſeen

ſeen among us, as was when he firſt caſt us into the furnace: And it is always a ſpiritual people or perſon that is fit for the delivery, and for this day that is faſt coming: I ſay, they are fitteſt both to receive mercies, and to meet with judgments.

2. Notwithſtanding of all that we have met with, we remain yet an unhumble people; ſo, as I ſaid in the former, as we are not fit for mercies, neither are we fit to meet with judgments: But the man and the woman that is fitteſt, and ſhall meet with mercy, when the Lord pours forth his judgments upon the land; it is they that are found lying in the duſt, mourning both for their own and the land's ſins. And believe it, our judgment ſhall be ſuch, that the ſtrong man ſhall not deliver himſelf by his ſtrength; nor the wiſe man by his wiſdom; nor the rich man by his riches, that he oft truſted to: But ſuch as God ſhall delight to honour in that day, ſhall be ſuch as ſhall be duly humbled, that is ſitting on the dunghill in aſhes, mourning for their own and the land's ſins.

3. An univerſal unwillingneſs, which is amongſt us, to ſearch out the evil of our ways: This is an epidemic diſeaſe amongſt us all; and I will tell you, We will never be a thriving people, till both miniſters and people be content to ſearch out their ſin, and to confeſs it, and deſire to be humbled in the ſight of the Lord for the ſame. O! if we were once brought to this then we might have hope concerning our caſe; but, oh! it is far otherwiſe with us.

4. The unreadineſs to believe the threatnings of God that is amongſt us: O! it is not believed that judgments are coming, yea haſtning upon this land for ſin. Oh! I may well tell you of this, but, alas! few, we fear, believe it: And indeed the judgments look ſo terrible like ſometimes, that I cannot tell if I believe it rightly myſelf as I ought: For a perſon can never win rightly to believe till he be putting in practice, in ſome meaſure, the things that will carry him through in a judgment: The want of the practice in theſe things, that will carry us through in a judgment is a great loſs; yet this is not believed.

5. That notwithſtanding that the Lord hath brought many of us to be robbed of our external privileges and worldly enjoyments, yet we are not brought to take Chriſt inſtead of all. O! wherefore is it that he hath brought us out of all theſe things and robbed us of them, but that we may come to himſelf? What is the cauſe that he hath taken away your external privileges, and many of your relations, but that he may endear himſelf to you, and that ye may take him inſtead of all? Wherefore is it that he hath brought you to wander in this wilderneſs in ſuch a deſert, and in ſuch a manner, with your

your lives in your hands, but that his excellency, may be the more ſeen by you? But, alas! Chriſt's excellency hath been but little ſeen or ſought after by many; and this ſays, That there are many in Scotland, that ſhall be found unfit and unready when the Lord brings on Scotland's judgments. O that ye could be prevailed with and ſtirred up to the exerciſe that is called for this day! and that this may be all our out-cries, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt.* Now, let us go to him by prayer, and ſeek his preſence and bleſſing to be amongſt us this day.

LECTURE VIII.

MATTHEW xiv. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

15. *And when it was evening his diſciples came to him, ſaying This is a deſert place, and the time is now paſt; ſend the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themſelves victuals.*
16. *But Jeſus ſaid unto them, They need not depart, give ye them to eat.*
17. *And they ſay unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fiſhes.*
18. *He ſaid, Bring them hither to me.*
19. *And he commanded the multitude to ſit down on the graſs, and took the five loaves and the two fiſhes, and looking up to heaven, he bleſſed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his diſciples, and the diſciples to the multitude.*
20. *And they did all eat, and were filled: And they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baſkets full.*
21. *And they that had eaten were about five thouſand men, beſide women and children.*

NOW, in ſpeaking to theſe words, I will ſhew you that I need not ſpeak to any words before, contained in this chapter for connection; for theſe hold only by themſelves. Chriſt had been here working a great work, in ſatisfying a great multitude with five loaves and two fiſhes; and ye ſee the multitude is numbered to be about five thouſand: A great miracle indeed! and it is here recorded to be the firſt miracle

cle that Chriſt had done in that place. Now, ye ſee that there is no difficulty in the words. There was a great multitude that followed Chriſt to the wilderneſs to hear the goſpel; ſome followed really and ſome but profeſſedly: And at night Chriſt's diſciples came to him, and deſire him to ſend away the multitude into the towns and villages, to buy meat to themſelves; for all they had was not ſufficient for them; and therefore they deſired Chriſt to diſmiſs them. But in anſwer to them, Chriſt ſhews, that there was no neceſſity for him to ſend them away, but bad give them to eat: Certainly this was a great ſurprizal to the diſciples; and ſo they objected againſt it, and ſaid, All that they had was not ſufficient to ſet before them. Now, Chriſt reproves not the diſciples for this objection as their ſin, but only commands the multitude to ſit down; and ſo he bleſſed and brake, and gave it to the diſciples, and they ſet it before the multitude, and they did all eat and were filled; and the fragments that were taken up, exceeded far all that was ſet down at the beginning. So that this is the meaning of the words in ſhort. And now there are ſome few things that I would obſerve.

Obſerve 1. In the beginning of the words read, the diſciples notice the people's caſe, deſiring Chriſt to ſend them away; and it may learn us this leſſon, "That it is the duty "of all that hear the goſpel to be counting with themſelves, "what coſt they may bear, or can endure for the following "of the ſame." For they that count not what ordinances may coſt them, will never endure long when hardſhips come; and they will be found unready when hardſhips come, and unmeet to meet with trouble in the following thereof. But here in Chriſt's anſwer to the diſciples, that the people needed not go away, he doth not reprove the diſciples, for what they ſaid as their ſin, but only will not yield to their aſking, to ſend the people away.

Obſerve 2 "That when the Lord calls for any thing that "is ſingular of his diſciples, or from his people, he will bear "them up in it:" So it is here, they need not depart, ſays Chriſt, for I will provide for them: So obſerve that whatever the Lord calls for at his people's hands, that is ſingular, he will furniſh them in it, in an extraordinary way and manner: We are called to uſe ordinary means, but when ordinary means will not do the turn, then they may look for ſomething extraordinary. Iſa. xlii. 19. *Behold, I will do a new thing; now it ſhall ſpring forth, ſhall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderneſs, and rivers in the deſert* Meaning thereby, that when they were robbed of the goſpel, and when all things ſtruck againſt them, that even in that caſe he would make waters to break forth in the wilderneſs, and ſtreams in the deſert; ſo doubt not, when he calls for

extraordinaries from his people but he will furniſh them with ſtrength for the ſame. They need not fear, if he but once promiſe, although they have but little in hand to do with, as the diſciples had here; for they could not think on this, becauſe they ſaw nothing but what was ordinary, and ſaw ſo little proviſion, as they had for ſuch a multitude, yet they go forward.

Obſerve, 3. "That whatever the Lord calls for at his peo-"ples hands, they ſhould not be diſcouraged, becauſe they "have but little furniture for the work; for when the Lord "calls for any work, or any piece of duty at your hands, ſet "about it; and doubt not but he will lay furniture to your "hands." So, I would give you this advice, Never compare your ſufficiency with your work; ye muſt look above ſenſe, and act faith on his omnipotent power; then, O take heed to yourſelves, and ſhift not duty, becauſe of the ſenſe of your weakneſs! for if the Lord put you to work, ere ye be not borne through in it, all the ſtrength that is in heaven ſhall be forth-coming to you; yea, all the ſtrength that is in Chriſt ſhall be employed for your through-bearing And it is one great reaſon, why the Lord ſometimes lets his people ſee ſo much of their own weakneſs, that they may be made to flee in unto him, and make uſe of him for their ſtrength: And he allows his people to tell them of all their weakneſſes, and to have the deep ſenſe of it upon their hearts; and this both maketh way for his power, and engageth his power to do for them: And, who would not bleſs him for this, that he takes ſuch a way to get glory to himſelf? And I am ſure we ſhould be content to ſee ourſelves nothing at all in the world, that he may be all in all unto us: We ſhould be content to be made ſtepping-ſtones, for him to ſtep upon, if ſo be that he get glory thereby. O! our inſufficiency is many ways to be ſeen, as in our not ſtanding before the enemies. O! we may ſee much of our weakneſs many ways: But, alas! we win not rightly to employ him for ſtrength O! we know not what it is to be near him, otherwiſe we would find his power and ſtrength to engage for us. But, alas! our little looking to him, and looking ſo much to the arm of fleſh, hath made us to find ſad diſcoveries of our own weakneſs. And remember of it friends, I fear ye find more yet, ere he come with deliverance, becauſe we know ſo little how to make uſe of him for our ſtanding. But whatever be our failings, or ſhort comings obſerve this; that a very naughty mean in his hand, is ſufficient to work a great work; for ſo we may ſee from this: How weak and mean ſoever the means be in his hand, he can work his work with it; he could ſoon make enemies to fall before him, and make a great victory,

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were we right in heart and in ways with him. But whatever we be, till Chriſt once take us in his own hand, we ſhall be nothing: But, O! when he takes his fan in his hand, and comes to purge his floor, he will make the ſtouteſt to fall and bow, and be taken by him. Therefore, O ſirs! ſeek this mainly, that Chriſt would take his work and people in his own hand, and then ye ſhall be fit for any work he calls you to.

Obſerve, 4 That when Chriſt made all the people ſit down, he took the loaves, and bleſſed, and brake, and gave them to the diſciples, and they to the people; where we may obſerve, "That he caſts a noble patern to his ſervants, to ſeek their "food from his own hand, for the feeding of his people. And now he doth it in a way, that he may ſhew himſelf therein; and the very order that he takes in doing of it is conſpicuous. if ye may obſerve the place and the mercy; then we may ſee what we are made to learn from it, That in your duty ye labour to get his fulneſs ſeen, under the ſenſe of your own emptineſs and weakneſs, as here. Surely all the bread and fiſhes that the diſciples had, would not have come a far length among this multitude, had not his power been ſeen in it.

Obſerve, 5. "That the more they come to Chriſt, to diſ-"tribute what they had, the more it increaſed among their "hands" O therefore, remember this, people that would increaſe and grow, and be uſeful, muſt, and ought to lay out and improve themſelves for the Lord, for Chriſt, and for his church and people! for this is the way to make the talent to increaſe. But it is ordinary with many profeſſors, eſpecially in this day, to decay; and no wonder, for they do not improve themſelves for the Lord; For he manifeſts himſelf ſo, in the diſtributing of his graces; this hath been commonly obſerved by many people to hold; but not always in external things, becauſe there is no promiſe for it; but that is ſure they ſhall have the hundred-fold in this life. O then friends! if ye would have gifts and qualifications, growing and thriving, then ſtudy to improve them all for God, and the good of his people; do what ye can to ſtrengthen the hands of your brethren: Such as are deſirous to aſk the way to Zion; ſtudy how ye may be uſeful to help them forward in their journey, in ſtrengthning their hands. God hath beſtowed much more grace and knowledge upon ſome of you than upon others; then; if ye would have the increaſe thereof improve it for the Lord, and for the good of his church and people.

Now, ye ſee from what hath been ſaid, that people called to any work, ſhould ſtand at no difficulty; for ye ſee that the Lord ſupplies all their wants; and when ordinary means will not do, he will do it by extraordinary means. However,

he will bring his people many times to the trial, to exercise their faith ere he appear, and do for them.

And, *lastly*, Ye may see what fragments they took up; where we would observe, "That the more a people or per-"sons, lay out themselves for the Lord, they shall have the "more in-come." O then be prevailed with, to lay your all out for him, for it is your duty; and besides, ye are bound in covenant to this. O then, lay out yourselves for him, who will largely recompense you: For he is able to do all things for his people, who is Lord of heaven and earth. Now to him be praise.

SERMON XXIX.

MARK xii. 34.

Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

THERE are two kingdoms in the world; God hath a kingdom, and Satan may be said to have a kingdom in the world. Although it be true that God hath a kingdom, even among the reprobates, in which he will be glorified in his justice; and (it will not be amiss to say) even in the elect before their conversion: For Christ came to the world, to destroy the works of the devil.

2. He hath a kingdom, which is his church visible; for his church is his special kingdom; I mean, the election according to free grace; for he hath a kingdom within a kingdom; an invisible within a visible kingdom.

But to come to the words. I shall not trouble you to repeat any thing in the verses before; only, in the twentieth and eight verse there was a discourse past betwixt Christ and one of the scribes, who answered discreetly, and he asked at our Lord, *What was the first and greatest commandment?* And when Christ had told him the sum of all, the scribe answered, *To love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength, and his neighbour as himself, was more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.* Then our Lord answered him again, and said, *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* So then, the words may be taken affirmatively one way, and negatively another: Thus the

Lord

Lord hath a kingdom over all the earth, as Creator of all his creatures; but more eſpecially, he hath a kingdom in his church: But in a ſingular manner, he hath a kingdom in the election, over which he rules, reigns, and dwells, by his word and Spirit. And this we underſtand to be the kingdom ſpoken of by Chriſt in theſe words; and ſo there is no difficulty in them. And ſo I ſhall lay down this doctrine.

DOCT. I. *That they who embrace Jeſus Chriſt, in the free offers of the goſpel, which is the great ſum of the goſpel, may be ſaid, to receive the kingdom of God.* For it is called, the goſpel of the kingdom, Matth. iv. 23. and ix. 35. And it is that only which enriches ſouls, and makes them fit to be members of this kingdom. O! it is a ſoul-ſatisfying kingdom, all delights are to be had in it.

But to clear the doctrine, I will confirm it by ſome marks and evidences, in ſhewing how the goſpel may be called the kingdom of God. And,

1. The goſpel may be called the kingdom of God, becauſe it points out the way to the kingdom of God, by ſhewing the duties required of all ſuch, as mind to be in the kingdom of God, and the way of performing them by the ſtrength that is in Chriſt The goſpel is like the ſtar that guided and led the three wiſe men to Chriſt. This goſpel never leaves ſuch as believe it, till it put them in poſſeſſion of the kingdom.

2. The goſpel may be called the kingdom of God, becauſe that in this goſpel the way is laid down, and the terms propoſed, not only to the bleſſed, but to all ſinners; ſo that, if ye will embrace the offer, ye need not doubt, but ye ſhall be received into the kingdom, according to the free invitation given, Iſa lv. 1. *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* Rev. xxii. 17. *And the ſpirit and the bride ſay, Come: And let him that heareth ſay, Come: And let him that is athirſt come: And whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely.* So that, where-ever this goſpel is offered, the kingdom of heaven is offered therein. O ſirs! if ye be willing to come to Chriſt, I offer him freely unto you, in this goſpel: Then chuſe what ye will do; if ye will receive him in this goſpel, ye ſhall be heirs with him of that never-fading and glorious kingdom.

3. The goſpel may be called the kingdom of God, becauſe receivers of the goſpel have a right to all that is within the kingdom; this is their priviledge, they have a right to God, they have a right to Chriſt, and they have a right to glory, felicity, and endleſs happineſs. Here is the way, if ye would have a right to this eternal life of happineſs, come and receive the offers made in the goſpel: and if ye will do it, I ſay, this is all that the juſtice of God requires of you, to come and em-

embrace Chriſt, and take him upon his own terms, and then all the rich promiſes in the bible are yours, yea, ye ſhall have a right to all the great and precious promiſes of the goſpel, and to this promiſe in particular, 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. *And I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty.*

4. The goſpel may be called the kingdom of God, becauſe the Lord confers upon them that receive the goſpel this rich privilege, that he gives them the earneſt of the inheritance, as the apoſtle ſays, Eph. i. 13, 14. *After that ye believed ye were ſealed with that holy ſpirit of promiſe, which is the earneſt of our inheritance.* They get this as the ſure earneſt of the kingdom, ſo that they may be ſaid to be in heaven, becauſe they have got the earneſt of heaven. O know ye what this is? It is far above what we can conceive: Yea, ſet to all the arithmeticians in the world, they would come far ſhort, in counting the earneſt penny that they have got, who have got the earneſt of the inheritance of the kingdom. And, O what can the full poſſeſſion and the enjoyment of Chriſt, of heaven, and of glory be, when the earneſt-penny is ſuch! They are ſealed with the holy ſpirit of promiſe: Know ye this any of you? Ye that know not what it is, to have the earneſt of this inheritance, ye are ſtrangers to that inward joy and peace, that ſome are made to feel.

5 The goſpel may be called the kingdom of God, becauſe the receivers of the kingdom are Chriſt's, and he hath them to lead through the wilderneſs. Men and women, know ye what it is to come through the wilderneſs, leaning on your beloved? Think on this; for although it be a free goſpel, yet it binds the receivers thereof, to walk in the way of commanded duties, as the king's high-way that leads to the kingdom. And there is a twofold uſe that I would make of this.

Uſe 1. Would ye be guided through the wilderneſs, then will ye come and receive the goſpel; come and embrace Jeſus Chriſt: Remember, ſirs, I offer him freely unto you this day; I offer him to you, that is the darling of heaven, the eternal delight of the Father, that is given to be a leader and commander to the people. Now, would ye be led on in his way? Then will ye come to Chriſt. O! if ye really knew the neceſſity that ye have of a guide, for without this guide there is no winning to the ſafe harbour. O! if this were believed, verily Chriſt would be more ſought after, for guiding and leading.

Uſe 2. Seeing it is ſo, that they that receive the goſpel receive the kingdom of God. O then! will ye eſteem much of the goſpel; for it is that which leads to the kingdom. Sure then it is an ineſtimable benefit. Oh! if this goſpel had been received by you, Chriſt ſhould have been more ſeen in his ex-

excellency and worth, than now many ſee him to be. But, however, to ſuch as receive the goſpel it gives a right to the poſſeſſion of the kingdom, and puts them in full poſſeſſion thereof: Therefore, as ye would not reject the kingdom of heaven, reject not the goſpel.

DOCT. II. *That a man may go near the kingdom of God, and not be in it.*

Now, the text confirms this doctrine, as alſo the parable of the fooliſh virgins, Matth. xxv. 1——14. for they were as diligent in trimming their lamps, as the wiſe virgins were, and they went out, that is, they went out from the wicked of the world they lived among, and joined themſelves with God's people, and had a well-trimmed profeſſion, as is clear from the place; and they had a ſort of ſerioufneſs after grace, for they ſought grace, verſe 8. *Give us of your oil.* Whence it is clear, that they went far, and left the way and guiſe of the world; and yet for all this, they were but near the kingdom of God: So a man may go a great length in the way to heaven, and yet never enter therein. And it is ſtrange how near a child of God may go to the pit of hell, and yet eſcape, and how others may go a great length, in the way to heaven, and yet never enter therein. Therefore I ſhall,

I Give a glance how near a man may come to the kingdom of heaven, and yet not win in there.

II. I ſhall ſhew you what he wants, that the man that enters this kingdom hath.

III. Give ſome marks whereby a man may know whether he be in this kingdom or not.

I. As to the firſt, what length a man or women may come in the way to heaven, and yet be but near the kingdom. This is a hard taſk indeed, therefore I dare not take in hand to ſpeak of it to purpoſe; but yet there are ſome marks that I ſhall name, of theſe that go a great length, and yet are but near the kingdom of heaven. And,

1. They may have an eminent profeſſion, and ſome meaſure of knowledge, and yet be but near the kingdom; as the apoſtle ſuppoſeth, that one may underſtand all myſteries and all knowledge, and yet be nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 2. So it is clear, that perſons may have a great meaſure of underſtanding and knowledge, and yet be but very hypocrites, without the ſubſtance of holineſs in their hearts: For a man may have the underſtanding enlightned, as to the knowledge of the letter of ſcripture, and out-ſide of religion; yea, he may have a curious knowledge or deſire to know with curioſity, which deſire flows from the brain only, that thereby they may debate for truth, and keep up among the Lord's people: And ſome glory in their knowledge, which glorying is not good: But this only is a right deſire after knowledge, when it is deſired,

fired, that thereby they may win to ſtudy obedience to the truth, and when they endeavour to believe and obey what they know; for otherwiſe it is not good, for the devil knows more of the truths of the ſcripture, and of the truths of God, than all the world beſide him, for although he loſt his holineſs when he fell, yet he loſt not his knowledge: But what is all ſuch knowledge, but like a light candle to let him ſee to go down to the pit?

2. They may excel in the outward form of religion, and yet be far from the kingdom of heaven. Ye know what the Phariſee could ſay of this for himſelf, That he was beyond many; and yet we ſay what our bleſſed Lord ſay, That the poor Publican went down from the temple rather juſtified than he, Luke xviii. 14. So they may go on in the performance of duties, and not be in reality and ſincerity, performing and doing theſe duties from a right principle, and for a right end. This only lieth in the heart, and that they never win to. Folk may be much in duties, and may out-ſtrip many that are really godly, and be near the kingdom of heaven: And this both profeſſors and miniſters may have, and yet want this ſincerity of heart, which the Lord approves of. Many may be much in duties, that have but little or no grace. I could name ſome this day, by name and ſirname, that would have prayed four hours together, and yet they are this day diſcovered to be but incarnate devils.

3. They may have purpoſes and reſolutions, and yet never bring theſe to practice, and ſo be but near the kingdom of heaven. This Pharaoh had many times, and yet when he was out of his extremity he turned back again; ſo they may come far ben in their purpoſes, and yet never get purpoſes and practices compared and ſquared together; and whatever they know, and whatever their purpoſes be, they know not what it is to be a new creature: And though, when in extremity, they may promiſe fair, yet when they are delivered from that, they may be as bent in ſinning as before, as Pharoah was. Many there are who think, if God was come with deliverance, they would be other folk, and ſtudy more holineſs and tenderneſs; but ſeeing the rod continues and lies on their back, they break off their purpoſes, and return with the dog to the vomit again: Many there be, that put God by with a good-day, and put off to ſuch and ſuch a time, and then ſay they, we will fall to and pray, and repent, and ſeek God; but their purpoſes fail them, and Satan fortifies himſelf ſtronger in their heart than before, and ſo they are kept captives by Satan ſtill.

4. They may come that length to confeſs ſin with ſome ſeriouſneſs, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven; look to Judas, who ſaid, *I have ſinned, in that I have betrayed in-*

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cent blood, Matth. xxvii. 4. Now, the ſcripture holdeth out that at what time ſoever a ſinner ſincerely confeſſeth and forſaketh his ſin, he ſhall find mercy, Prov. xxviii. 13. But this confeſſion of theirs is either from a conſcience awakened with wrath, as Judas's was, or elſe it was for the ſhame of ſin; ſo that there is no real grief of heart for ſin, as it is diſhonouring to God: And it is but for ſuch ſins as are public to the ſight of the world; but to have true brokenneſs of heart for all ſins, this they cannot win at, and though they confeſs ſin, yet they ſtill retain and love it

5. They may win, not only to mourn for ſin, but alſo to have a deſire after repentance; as it was with Eſau, who *found no place of repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears*, Heb. xii. 17. So let men and women be never ſo ſerious-like in mourning for ſin, if it only flow from the evil that comes by ſin, and not from the evil of ſin itſelf, they know not what the right heart-conviction for ſin is, although they win to a great meaſure of ſorrow, as is clear from ſcripture, yet they are far from real repentance.

6. They may hate ſin in ſome reſpect, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven; as Abſalom, ye know, hated his brother Amnon for his ſin in defiling his ſiſter Tamar. But what was it that moved him to this, but becauſe of the ſhame of ſin in the eyes of the world? So their hatred againſt ſin would not ſo much appear, were it not ſhameful in the eyes of the world. Abſalom hated uncleanneſs in Amnon, but he did not hate it in himſelf. I think every one hath ſome ſin, that is like Saul, higher from the ſhoulders and upward, above all the reſt of their ſins, that they cannot win eaſily over: They may win to hate ſome ſins in particular, but they cannot win to hate all ſin, and though they may leave off many ſins, that formerly they practiſed, yet they ſtill keep a love to their beloved Saul-like ſins.

7. They may forſake their former courſe that they lived in, and may aſſent to the truth of the goſpel; they may leave off their drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs, and forſake their former company, that they uſed to haunt; yea, they may win to quit theſe ſins in their practice, but yet they cannot from a right principle hate all ſin.

8. They may have a deſire after grace, where there is no true grace, or right deſire after it, as it is ſaid, The deſire of the hypocrite ſhall fail: The deſire that the hypocrite hath, fails anent the object; for where grace is real, and rightly ſought after, it flows from a love to holineſs, to be really waſhed and cleanſed from all ſin, and to be renewed in holineſs. It is true, hypocrites may have many flaſhes; but where this real love to holineſs is wanting, all ſuch flaſhes are naught. As, caſt water often upon a ſtone, it may have ſome impreſ-

ſion to make it ſoft, but it never reacheth the heart of the ſtone; even ſo it is with the hypocrite. I ſay, there may be many flaſhes where no grace is. The eloquence of a preacher ſometimes may be get flaſhes in hearers, where nothing of ſaving grace is: Ezekiel was to his hearers, as one that played ſkilfully on a pleaſant inſtrument. There may be ſome ſeeming delight in hearing the word, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven. O the great length that a perſon may come with flaſhes and common operations, where true ſaving grace is wanting, when they win to hear the word, and to receive it with joy, (as in the parable of the ſeed ſown upon the ſtony ground, Matth. xiii. 20.) and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven when all is done! The apoſtle ſays, That whatever he knew or did, if he wanted charity, which is love, he was nothing, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Yea, many many win to the very threſhold of heaven, and have their hands chopt off on the threſhold, and never enter in.

9. A man may have great gifts and eloquence in parts, and may be uſeful to others, and yet they themſelves be but near the kingdom of heaven. A man may preach with eloquence, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven: Ye know that Judas came nothing behind the reſt of the apoſtles in preaching and working of miracles, and yet he was but a devil: So I ſay, a man may preach, have great gifts, and be uſeful to others, and yet be but a caſt away, as Judas was, whoſe call to preach the goſpel was not ſanctified to himſelf; for Chriſt can water his people himſelf: But remember, they muſt have Chriſt's commiſſion, or elſe they cannot profit a people to whom they ſay they are ſent: For the Lord ſays, concerning the prophets that ran and were not ſent, That they ſhould not profit the people at all, Jer. xxiii. 21, 22.

10. Profeſſors may have great hopes, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven; as the fooliſh virgins had, when they went out with the reſt to meet the bridegroom, and trimmed their lamps. But, as Job ſays of the hypocrite, ſo may I ſay of ſuch, *They will not always call upon God*, Job xxvii. 10. Neither do they win always to depend upon God, and to fix their hope in him; nor have they this diſtinguiſhed mark of a true believer, 1 John iii. 3 *And every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as he is pure.* So if they endeavour not to have the heart purified and cleanſed from all ſin, they want the true mark of grace; for true hope is begotten into the heart by the Spirit of God, but the hope of the hypocrite, he takes it up of himſelf, and knows not whence it came; he may win to ſay that God is powerful, and ſo he will truſt in him; but he can never win to lay hold on, and believe in Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the promiſes are yea and amen, and this way to make application of the promiſes to him-

himſelf; and ſo, that hope of his is not of the right ſtamp. O but it is ſad to conſider, to ſee people have ſuch big and ſtrong hopes, as they think, and yet notwithſtanding of all that, to be miſerably deceived by this their hope! O! how ſad and lamentable will it be to ſuch, when it ſhall be diſcovered to themſelves, that for all that they have done or hoped for, they have been but near the kingdom of heaven.

11. They may go this length, to ſuffer many things for profeſſing the truth; yea, even as Paul ſays, *to give their bodies to be burned*, 1 Cor. xiii. 3; and yet wanting true love to Chriſt, all is naught: Importing this much, that at the firſt view, men may be brought to die for the truth, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven. Hypocrites may be ſo wedded to their name and credit, that they may come this great length in ſuffering, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven:——But to ſuffer with an eye to the glory of God, and as ſuffering upon the account of Chriſt, this they cannot do. And likewiſe I ſhall add this word, That they that are near the kingdom may have ſome convictions.——But theſe never work to converſion; for they are in this like Ephraim, *a cake not turned*, Hoſ. vii. 8. O ſeek for the thorough work of the Spirit, to convince you of ſin, of your own inability to help yourſelves, and that he may convert you ſavingly

I might mention more ſteps that the hypocrite may come to, that might make us all fear; for I fear there be many here, that are not come that length yet, that hypocrites win to. O! rouſe up yourſelves, and ſee what ye have been doing; for there are many here, I fear, in a dead caſe and condition, that have never win this length that I have named, that ſome win to, and yet never win within the kingdom of heaven more than devils ſhall win. O! that ye would fall to and ſearch yourſelves, and make ſure work! I ſhall ſay no more, but leave it in the Lord's hand, for the bleſſing to your ſouls. And to him be praiſe.

PREFACE.

THERE is one thing for which I am jealous of the moſt part of you that are come here, and it is this, that in your coming many of you have not the right end before you. I would think this a ſingular meeting, if the fourth, yea the eighth or the tenth perſon that is here, durſt ſay, as before God, that they have the right end before them: And,

1. I fear that there be not a few here this day, that are only come for a name; and ſurely ſuch have a wrong end before them; and yet it is to be feared that many have no better end than this, but to get a name and a profeſſion; but I may pronounce all ſuch to be but rebels to God, for all the pains they have been at in coming here: And, O but it be ſad to carry a profeſſion ſo coſtly, and to have and ſeek no more! O! I would lay this to your doors, and tell you, ye that are guilty of this, that ye have not a right end before you in your here coming

2. A ſecond ſort, that in their coming here, have not a right end before them, are theſe that are come only out of a principle of curioſity; they come only to hear ſome new thing, or to ſee ſomething that is to be ſeen here. O! I fear there be ſome here that have no better end before them than this: But theſe are as great fools as the other; and, for my part, I think it is ſtrange to ſee men and women run ſuch riſks, both at God's hand and man's, for mere curioſity: For, certainly, as we are the butt of enemies malice and diſpleaſure, and are here with the hazard of our lives; ſo, to be under God's diſpleaſure is harder; for God will aſk what we have done with ſuch a day, when he covered a table to us in the wilderneſs, in the preſence of our enemies Remember it will coſt you an anſwer to God, and ye muſt count for this opportunity.

3. A third ſort, that in their here-coming have not a right end before them, are they that come only to ſeek ordinances. And there are many that in their coming, I fear, ſeek no farther than ordinances; But I will tell you, if this be all the courſe that ye mind to run, it will be long ere ye come to the kingdom of God: For although ye come to the ordinances, ye muſt come farther, even to God, to ſeek him in the ordinances; for ordinances are but the wing or ſhell to carry the ſoul to Chriſt. Therefore remember this, ye that come only to the ordinances, and ſeek no further, that this will be an article of your indictment.

4 A fourth ſort, that in their here-coming have not a right end before them, are theſe that have this as their errand,

rand, to ſeek a flaſh and a frame; ſometimes they have found this at a preaching, that hath made them to think their caſe right enough, and ſo they have ſitten down upon this: This ſort indeed go beyond all the reſt; but yet they go not far enough. What are they like? They are like theſe that ſit in the ſun-beams, and ſatisfy themſelves therewith, and never ſeek to the ſun itſelf; ſo many reſt on the beams that come from Chriſt in the goſpel, and never ſeek to Chriſt himſelf, and ſo they may be enlightned with flaſhes and frames and get no more. But, as it is folly to come and ſeek flaſhes and frames, and no more, ſo it is a difficulty to get the hearts of people brought off, and denied to this; but they will be ready to conclude, that their mountain ſtands ſure, and that they ſhall never be moved, and yet was never built upon Chriſt.

5. A fifth ſort, whoſe end in coming here is worſe than any of the reſt that we have named, are they who come to catch and carry away any thing that they hear, to the prejudice of the work God, or to delate ſome whom they know to the enemies; and take away an ill report of the way of God, and the further reproaching of the goſpel: But, if there be any ſuch here, remember, God hath his eye upon you, and he will pay you home to the full for your pains, when he reckons with you. But, as we ſaid, it is ill for people to have bad ends before them; ſo we ſay, it is bad for people to have no ends at all before them: And this leads me to,

6 The ſixth and laſt ſort that I ſhall name, and that is, ſuch as have no end nor errand at all for their coming here, that have expoſed themſelves to ſo much travel and wearineſs, to come to this deſert place, upon ſo great hazard, no leſs than the utmoſt of cruelty that men can deviſe or do. But we ſay, that we fear, that ſuch as have not been examining their ends, before they came here, that when God ſhall reckon with them, they ſhall be found to have no end at all. But ye will ſay, Who are theſe that have a right end before them in their coming here? We ſay, even ſuch as are come to ſeek the Lord, *Seek ye me, ſaith the Lord, and ye ſhall live.* And we tell you, if ye had all this end before you, ye ſhould meet with much of the Lord's preſence in his ordinance. But believe it, ſirs, we look like a people, and a congregation that are indifferent, whether we meet with him or miſs him, and that is very ſad. Therefore let us go to God by prayer, that he that hath the power over the hearts of all men and women to diſpoſe of them as he pleaſeth, that he would change the hearts of ſuch as have bad errands before them; and that ſuch as have no errands, that he would give them one before they go. *So let us pray.*

SERMON

SERMON XXX.

MARK xii. 34.

Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

THERE are two ſorts of folk, and each of them ought to have a particular queſtion to themſelves. And, 1. Theſe that are not win to know that they have an intereſt in Jeſus Chriſt, they ſhould put this queſtion to themſelves, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* 2. Theſe who know that they have an intereſt in him, and are clear and diſtinct concerning the ſame, they ſhould put this queſtion to themſelves, *What ſhall we render to the Lord for his goodneſs to us?*

My dear friends, I do really wonder that any of us, can ſo much as eat our bread, till we come to know, in ſome meaſure that we have an intereſt in Chriſt; ſhould it not be ſtill our out-cry, *What ſhall we do to be ſaved?* O! this ſhould be ſtill your queſtion, what is wanting in me; that is to be found in a ſound believer? And this leads me to the purpoſe in hand: In the foregoing part of the day, I ſhewed you what length a man might come, and yet be but near the kingdom of heaven. Now, I come,

II. To the ſecond thing propoſed, which is to ſhew you what is wanting, in ſuch that are but near the kingdom, that the real believer that is in the kingdom of God hath. And,

1. Whatever the man hath, that is but near the kingdom, this is always wanting a thorough obedience, to all the commandments of God; and the commandments of God are two-fold, like the ſoul and body of man; ſo people that are but near the kingdom of God, may obey the out-ſide of the commandments, but as for the inward part, that conſiſts in cleanſing of the heart, this they want ſtill; ſo people may pray and hear, and be very forward in all out-ſide duties; but they cannot win to perform them, in love and fear, and heart obedience to the commandments of God.

2. The ſecond thing that is wanting in him that is but near the kingdom, and that is he always wants the right principle of the new creature, which is abſolutely neceſſary, 2 Cor. v. 17. *Therefore if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: Old things are paſt away; behold, all things are become new.* The man that is in Chriſt is a new creature, not only in his practice; but alſo in his heart; a hypocrite may be new in his

his practice; but not in the principle of a ſanctified heart: A hypocrite may both pray much and preach much, and may excel others in qualifications and parts, but this thing they ſtill want a new heart.

3 The third thing that the man wants, that is but near the kingdom, he ay wants a right motive; and where this does not oil the wheels of our performances, we will never perform the duty rightly; for, if it be love to ourſelves, that is not right; but, if it be out of love to God, that is right; that is the motive, that moves all the man's performances rightly. Now a hypocrite can never win to do all that he doth out of love to God; for a hypocrite cannot *delight himſelf in the Almighty*, Job xxvii 10. So then it is impoſſible for him to love God, ſeeing he cannot delight himſelf in God; ſo, whatever they get, this is ſtill wanting, love to God, as the right motive in their duties.

4. The fourth thing, that the man wants, that is but near the kingdom, he always wants the right end; and doth not obſerve and practiſe, what the apoſtle gives in charge to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. x. 31. *Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* Now, they that go neareſt the kingdom, and go not in, cannot win to this, to do all that they do to God's glory: Hypocrites may ſeek heaven with ſome ſerioufneſs, but not ſo as that Chriſt may have all the glory; for, he only ſeeks heaven becauſe of its happineſs but never deſigns God's glory thereby.

5. The fifth thing that the man wants, That is but near the kingdom, and that is, the right regulating of all his actions; he never wins to ſeek and ſerve God upon a right account, he never wins to ſeek and ſerve him as God: He that wins near the kingdom, may win to love God, for the happineſs this is to be found in him; but he never loves God as God, for himſelf; therefore, once win to get love to God, and to do all ye do on a right account, and then ye ſhall win to do all well; and whatever ye win to, if this be wanting, ye are nought if ye ſhould pray one half of your days, and weep the other, yet ye are but hypocrites; and, remember, that hypocrites are ranked with the firſt ſort that go to the pit; and I think that they have the hotteſt part in all hell: They are ugly devils with a white coat of profeſſion: Like Judas, they carry, under a vail of love, a dagger to ſtab Chriſt. O friends: remember whatever ye win to, if this be wanting, ye are within the rank of hypocrites, though ye ſhould come never ſo near the kingdom of heaven. Many have gone ſo near, to ſpeak ſo, that they have had their hands ſtricken off, on heaven's threſhold.

III. Now, the third thing which I propoſed to ſpeak to, was, what they muſt have that enter into the kingdom of God.

God. So then, there are ſome marks and evidences, whereby a man may win to know, whether they be in the kingdom or no. And,

1. If ye be within the kingdom of God, there will be in you a real turning from all ſin, with an univerſal obedience to all the commandments of God; for it is to ſuch that the kingdom is promiſed, Ezek. xviii. 12. *But if the wicked will turn from all his ſins, that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die.* So the promiſe of the kingdom is only unto ſuch, as ſtudy an univerſal obedience unto all the commandments of God: But the hypocrite he only cloſeth with ſome commandments, and ſets to, to obey them outwardly; but the man that is in the kingdom, he hates all ſin, and takes up all duty; ſo that every true Chriſtian is perfect in his reſolutions; he reſolves and endeavours perfect obedience to all the commandments of God; though in his practice he wins not up that length yet he endeavours univerſal obedience; ſo then, it will not be the picking out of this commandment, or that commandment, and obeying that, but it muſt be an univerſal obedience to all the commandments of God that muſt be ſtudied, as David ſaid, Pſalm cxix. 6. *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect unto all thy commandments.*

2. They that are in the kingdom ſtudy uniformity in their obedience, not only in the matter of duty; but in the manner thereof, and timing of it; ſo they obſerve both the matter, manner, and timing of the duty: For, a man that is out of the kingdom, he may read and pray much; but it is alike with him if he get the duty by: But a man that is in the kingdom, if he ſhould ſit half a day upon his knees, if he meet not with ſomething from the Lord, he will account all as undone; ſo he that is in the kingdom, he will find ſomething of a fervant and cordial joining of the outward and inner man, in ſerving the Lord.

3. They that are in the kingdom, they have always ſome ſincerity of heart in what they do; and this may be called the march-ſtone betwixt the two, the really godly and the hypocrite; for this the man that is not in the kingdom, cannot win to; but the man that is within the kingdom, hath the witneſs of ſincerity within him: And where ſincerity is, God will caſt a mantle of love on all their other infirmities; for there is nothing that is ſo well-pleaſing to God as this; and there is nothing more provoking to God than the want of this.

4. They that are within the kingdom, they will be much in duty, and yet much above duty: Much in duty in obedience to the commandments of God; and much above duty

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in denial to it! ſo the man that is in the kingdom, is won far above all duties, and yet much in duty: But the hypocrite thinks if it be near, that he needs not fear his winning in; and if he be much in duty, he needs not be above duty: But the man that is in the kingdom, is much in duty, and above duty.

5. They that are in the kingdom, they put an high eſtimation upon Chriſt, 1 Pet. ii. 7. *Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious.* This is a clear mark; and, therefore, O man and woman whoever thou be, that hath not win to ſee Chriſt more precious to thee, than all that is in heaven and in earth beſides him, I tell thee, thou art not in the kingdom of God. Faith hath two eyes that look to Chriſt; the one eye looks to the power that is in Chriſt; the other eye looks on his excellency. So he that wins to believe, hath a high eſteem of Chriſt, both for his power and his excellency.

6. They that are in the kingdom, there is no difficulty that can come in their way, that will ſcar them from Chriſt: There is ſome that may be near Chriſt, and yet a ſtorm may drive them back again: The thorns and the tares chocked the ſeed that was ſown on the thorny ground; but nothing can choke the ſeed that is ſown on the good ground. There is no difficulty that will ſcar him from Chriſt and from duty, that is once in the kingdom. He will not cry out with the ſluggard, *There is a lion in the way.* Nay, when difficulties ariſe, he will mind that word of Chriſt, Matth. xvi. 24. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs and follow me.* Do not think this ſtrange, my friends, for he holds ſelf denial as a true mark of a right follower of him. O backſliders! think upon this, ye who have turned back, and left the way of God, and denied his truth, for fear of the wrath of man. Remember that Chriſt ſays to you, *That his ſoul hath no pleaſure in ſuch as draw back: But he will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity,* Heb. x. 38. Pſal. cxxv. 5. Ye took your profeſſion eaſily up, and ye quitted it as eaſily. It may be, if ye had known better how ye came by your profeſſion, ye would not have parted ſo eaſily with it. O ſuſpect yourſelves, you that are guilty! for I would have you to be jealous of your faith, that quit it ſo eaſily.

7. They that are in the kingdom, they have cloſed with Chriſt in his own terms; they have received him with humility, brokenneſs, and ſincerity of heart: And this unites all the affections; a broken heart cloſes with a broken Chriſt; and this unites all the affections to him: And the more that Chriſt is cloſed with, they are the more united to Chriſt in all his offices, ſo that they can neither be ſeparated nor parted; he is a Prophet, a Prieſt, and a King to them; for all Chriſt muſt be received, and they muſt look to him for all.

Chriſt and croſſes, and loſſes, Chriſt and reproaches, Chriſt and impriſonments, Chriſt and wanderings, Chriſt and death, and whatever may follow Chriſt. Now, ye that think that ye are in the kingdom; look if ye have received Chriſt this way, and with what ſincerity of heart ye have done it.

8. They that are in the kingdom their inherent ſin is ay before them, as David ſaid, Pſalm li. 3. *My ſin is ever before me.* I like not ſuch as think one day or one hour before they die enough to confeſs and mourn for their ſin, for I ſadly ſuſpect that caſe not to be right. But they that are in the kingdom, they cannot get their former ſins and their daily failings out of their mind; but remember that God lets them not ſee their ſins thus for their miſery; but only to let them ſee what they have been; and to be thankful to him, for what they now are by grace, and them that keep not up a humbling ſight of ſin, I doubt their caſe at preſent; for they that are in the kingdom they are keeped humble, under the ſight and ſenſe of their ſin; and yet they are made to rejoice in Chriſt.

9. They that are in the kingdom of God and have the begun poſſeſſion of it, by the work of grace in their hearts, they will have a longing deſire for more of heaven; for they that have grace in exerciſe, have longing deſires to have it perfected. What! are ye not longing to be with Chriſt, ſirs? O! where this is, there will be a longing to be with Chriſt; and ye will be made ſometimes to cry out, O that time had wings to flee away! and, O that the ſhadows were gone that I might get my long ſummer day of eternity! O if it were come that I might get my fill of Chriſt! But, alas! I fear many of you are ſtrangers to this life: But if ye have the evidence of this ſealed upon your ſpirits and hearts, that ye are in the kingdom of God; ye will find ſomething of all theſe fore-mentioned marks, to be in you: Ye will find, an univerſal obedience to all God's commandments; an uniformity in obedience not only in the matter, but in the manner of duty; ye will have a high eſtimation of Chriſt; and a cloſing with Chriſt in his own terms; original ſin, will be ever before you; and no croſs will ſeparate you from Chriſt, and ye will find in yourſelves a longing to have the work of grace perfected in your ſouls; and to be with Chriſt, in the full enjoyment of himſelf in glory. This made Paul to be in *a ſtrait betwixt two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt*, Phil. i. 23. And this made John cry out, in anſwer to the Spirit and to the Bride, *Even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus*, Rev. xxii. 20. And this the ſoul of every true believer will ſay. Now, I come to the laſt thing propoſed, which is the uſe of the doctrine.

Uſe 1.

Uſe 1. Is it ſo, that the way to the kingdom of heaven is not eaſy, then this may ſerve for an uſe of exhortation, for all to be diligent; for ye may go many a ſtep, and yet not win to the kingdom of heaven. Ye may not think, ſirs, that ye will win to heaven ſleeping; for, if it were ſo eaſy to win there, as ſome dream of, what need had there been of Paul's threefold exhortation, *To examine, prove, and know our own-ſelves?* 2 Cor xiii 4. But doth not our bleſſed Lord put this beyond debate, and out of doubt, when he ſaith, Matth. vii 14. *Becauſe ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.* If ye come to heaven, ye muſt come over the belly of your luſts and idols; yea, every one of you muſt wage war with yourſelf, and with all that oppoſe you in the way of your duty. And as for you that know nothing of this warfare, ye do not know what religion is; and the more ye ſtudy this, the more of the difficulty thereof ye will find: Some there are, who, if in their life-time they get an hour to pray before death, they will not fear wrath, for what ſins they have formerly committed: But if that word be true, that is in 1 Peter iv. 18. *If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear?* That is, if the holieſt have much ado, to get their feet over the threſhold of heaven; then ſurely ſuch have juſt cauſe to fear, that they ſhall never enter in there.

Uſe 2. Is of inſtruction. Seeing that the gate is very ſtrait and narrow, that leads to the kingdom of heaven, then what ſhall become of many of you, that never come the length that hypocrites have come? O! What will ye ſay? and, how will ye meet with God, when he comes to count with you for a preached goſpel? And, what will ye think of a Mediator that was offered to you, whom ye ſlighted and deſpiſed; when the heaven and the earth ſhall melt away, and great men and mean men ſhall howl and cry, and all the tribes of the earth ſhall wail becauſe of him? O! this will be the portion of hypocrites from God.

Uſe 3. Is of trial: For all of you to try yourſelves, and ponder in your hearts and ſay, O ſoul! whether art thou in the kingdom of heaven or not? O be exhorted to this whatever thy ſtate be! O man and women! it is ſafe for thee to try thy ſtate, to ſearch thy ſtate; and if matters be right betwixt God and thy ſoul, it will be thy peace; and if not, thou may poſſibly get it righted. And, for my part; I count him the beſt Chriſtian, that is moſt accurate, in this ſearching and communing with his own heart; for, if ye neglect this, ye may come to loſe the ſight of your intereſt in Chriſt, if ever ye had it; and to be careleſs of the ſtate of your ſouls, if ye never wan to it

Uſe 4. And it may be for counſel. Do not ſatisfy yourſelves with being near the kingdom of God, but go into it: And, for this end, break the bargain and peace with your luſts and idols; and, make up peace with God, thro' Chriſt our peace-maker, and ye ſhall find a great advantage in the exchange: For the wicked have but peace with ſin and ſinful men, but the godly have peace with God. O! will ye quit all other things, and ſeek to be intereſted in him; for, it is to be feared that many here have proclaimed peace with ſin; have ſome idol or other. O break the bargain, and make peace with Chriſt! Make choice of him, for he can give you that which no other lover can give you. O break that peace with your luſts and idols, and make peace with him? Remember he offers himſelf freely to you this day; chooſe therefore what ye will do. O ſeek for the fulneſs of the Spirit of Chriſt, and reſt upon nothing but upon himſelf alone! and ſeek to be in the kingdom of God, by the thorough work of converſion upon your ſouls.

And now to all that are in the kingdom, I proclaim peace in the name of God, whatever troubles they are under here; ſo enter into the kingdom through Chriſt only, for that is the way to it. But as for you, who will not come to him, and enter into the kingdom through Chriſt only, who is the way to it, I do, in like manner, proclaim war with that ſoul from God, whatever ye be in your profeſſion. O friends! lay it to heart, and chooſe ye whether it be better to have heaven's peace, and the devil and the world's feud; or to have the devil and the world's peace, and feud with God for ever. And now to him, who is the purchaſer of true peace, be glory and praiſe for ever. *Amen.*

PREFACE.

IF I ſhould aſk this queſtion at you who are come here this night, Would ye have the Lord coming back to Scotland again with the goſpel? I trow, if I ſhould begin at the one end of you, and go out at the other end, that I ſhould not get a negative anſwer; ye will all ſay, That ye would have this day again. But, O! where is the right exerciſe that ye ſhould be exerciſed with, in order to your preparation to meet him? for his coming will diſappoint many of their

their expectation: And therefore, I would offer theſe two things to your conſideration:

1. The firſt is this, He will come, but his coming will be in flaming fire, to take vengeance on the generation; he will come with the garments of vengeance, and the cloke of ſeverity: He will come, and will have his heart avenged on the inhabitants of Scotland: He will come, and he will make the land to ſhake before him, and melt for fear; all hearts ſhall be pained, and all faces turned into paleneſs: This ſhall be the manner of his coming. Ay! it will be very ſad and affrighting to them that he is come to deliver; it will even be with them, as it was with Chriſt's diſciples, when he came walking unto them upon the ſea, they were much troubled, and cried out for fear; his coming ſhall be ſuch, that his treading ſhall be ſad, even upon theſe that he is coming to deliver.

2. His coming ſhall be ſuch, that many ſhall be miſerably diſappointed of their expectation: Many of you think that ye have a deſire after his coming, and have the expectation of great things when he comes, but ye ſhall be greatly diſappointed; for his coming will be with great fewels of fire. I may compare ſuch folk to theſe ſpoken of, Iſa. lix. 2. *Yet they ſeek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordinances of their God; they aſk of me the ordinances of juſtice, and take delight in approaching to God.* They had a ſort of longing after him; and wherefore was it? They had expectation of great things; they thought they ſhould get temporal felicity, but they miſtook him. So many think that they will have brave days when he comes back, but they will be greatly diſappointed; for, his coming will be with their deſtruction. *To what end*, ſaith the prophet, *is it for you to deſire the day of the Lord? Shall it not be darkneſs and not light?* Amos v, 18.

We think it ſtrange that many underſtand ſo little what they are doing: They will pray for his coming back to the land again, and in the mean time they are joining with all the ſinful courſes of the times. They will pray for his coming, and in the mean time they are doing what they can by their practice to keep him away. Many of you are going and joining with the hirelings of the time, in hearing them. What! do ye expect that that Dagon, whom ye worſhip, will ſtand when he comes back to the land? I tell you, that his coming will be in ſeverity to you: And it is a great queſtion to me, if any of theſe that have gone back, and left the way of the Lord, and joined with ſinful courſes, ſhall win through the calamity Do not think to ſooth yourſelves up with theſe vain hopes; for his coming will be in another kind than many look for.

But,

But, poſſibly ye will have this queſtion to aſk, Who will theſe be that he will come in mercy to, and that will likely be ſpared, and meet with mercy and win through? Anſwer, Truly that is an odd queſtion, and not eaſily anſwered: But I ſhall ſhew you ſome marks of theſe, that likely he will come in mercy to, although in judgment. And,

1. Theſe that have fled to him for refuge, and to be ſheltered under the ſhadow of his wings, and to be hid from wrath; theſe that are fleeing to Chriſt, fleeing from themſelves, from Satan, and from the world, and have choſen Chriſt for their alone portion and choice; it is theſe only that he will likely ſpare. But, do not think, that when Chriſt hath been ſo great a ſtranger in the land, and the rod hath lain ſo heavy upon his people, think not that he will ſpare hypocrites; no, no: They ſhall meet with an overflowing ſtroke: They need not expect that they will be ſpared, be ſpared who will; but, theſe that expect to be hid in that day, muſt reſolve to be in Chriſt, to be hid under the ſhadow of his wings, and have an intereſt in him, and ſtudy to make it their work to carry as ſuch.

2. Theſe that likely will be ſpared, are theſe who are ſhaking their hands, and keeping them clean of the cauſes of his controverſy with Scotland: The Lord hath taken up a quarrel and controverſy with the inhabitants of Britain; therefore, theſe that he will ſpare, will be theſe that are keeping themſelves clean of the cauſes of his indignation. Ye need never expect to win through the ſtorm, and to be free of the ſtroke, by going in under theſe curates, and ſo think that ye will thrimble through th ſtorm; no, no: God is purſuing his quarrel againſt the land, for their backſliding from him; and, think ye, by ſo doing to be ſpared? No: I will tell you aſſuredly, that God's anger ſhall ceaſe in the deſtruction of ſuch: But, it will be only theſe that ſhall be ſpared, that are ſtudying how to be faithful to the Lord; it was only Joſhua and Caleb, that followed the Lord fully, that he brought over Jordan, when the reſt, even the whole camp of Iſrael, died in the wilderneſs: It is only theſe that are ſtudying to be faithful to him, that he will bring through and ſpare, when he makes way for his wrath and indignation, that he will reveal with fury upon this land.

2. Theſe likely he will ſpare and bring through, that are putting a blank in his hand, that he may afflict and chaſten as he pleaſeth: Theſe that have their wills reſigned wholly to him, and that are putting no limits upon his ſovereignty, as to his chaſtiſing and contending; theſe that are crying out, *It is the Lord, let him do as ſeemeth good to him:* and ſo ſtudy ſubmiſſive patience, and are waiting under all his chaſtiſements,

ments. It is not theſe that he will bring through, that are crying out, How ſhall we ſhift the croſs, and ſhun the trials? But it will be theſe that are crying out, How ſhall we carry rightly under trials, and under the croſs?

4. It will be theſe that likely he will bring through, that are ſubmitting themſelves to what the Lord pleaſeth to do to them; them that are reſolving with themſelves to die in the common calamity, and are content if God get glory, that they be made ſtepping ſtones for his returning. It will not be theſe that will win through, that have taken ſinful anxious longing to win through, to ſee good days; no, no: I doubt if any feck of theſe ſhall win through. There muſt be a reſolving, and a ſubmitting of themſelves to what the will of the Lord is: For, his coming ſhall have an uncouth aſpect; it ſhall be as terrible like, as to look death in the face; and, in ſome reſpect, death ſhall be choſen rather than life, and be as deſirable: And it ſhall be theſe that are content to die, and to leave their carcaſes in the wilderneſs, that the Lord ſhall bring through.

5. It ſhall be theſe that he ſhall ſpare and bring through, that are reſolving upon the worſt of it, come what will: *That neither height nor deep, things preſent nor things to come, ſhall ſeparate them from the love of God, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*, nor make them forſake his way; theſe that are reſolutely ſet for him, ſtudying heart-honeſty in his matters, and that are reſolving to follow him as their beloved, through death and blood, and all that may come in their way. And, Oh! ſhall he not have ſuch a company in Scotland, that ſhall be found thus faithful for him, that ſhall not love their lives unto the death, to do ſervice to him? It ſhall be ſuch that he will bring through, that ſhall not fear fire or ſword, gibbet or tortures; theſe that reſolutely reſolve upon the worſt of it. Ah! alas! we are an unprepared people for ſuch a mercy. Let us put up our ſuits to him, that he would prepare a people for the good that he is coming to do to theſe lands.

Let us pray.

LEC-

LECTURE IX.

MALACHI i. 12, 13, 14.

12. *But ye have profaned it, in that ye ſay, The table of the Lord is polluted, and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.*

13, *Ye ſaid alſo, Behold, what a wearineſs is it, and ye have ſnuffed at it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the ſick; thus ye brought an offering: Should I accept this of your hands? Saith the Lord.*

14. *But curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing. For I am a great king, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen.*

MANY may get much of their hypocriſy in matters of their worſhip hid from others, that are like themſelves, they may bogle and beguile men, but there is an all-ſeeing eye of God, that knows well what is in man, and what is deſigned by all men; particularly and eſpecially in the matter of his worſhip, he knows well who is guilty, and he will find them out: There is not a hiding-place for man to get his ſin hid from God; there is no place to be found for theſe; no pretence that men may make for themſelves, that will either hide a man's iniquity from this all-ſeeing eye, nor no excuſe for it will be admitted of: Men's external ſhows may paſs for much among men, but it is not poſſible that theſe ſhows of religion, how gliſtering-like ſoever, will paſs in the ſight of a jealous God, who is a juſt Judge. But to come to the words read.

In the foregoing part of this chapter, the Lord is ſhewing by this prophet, how this people, eſpecially the prieſts, were exceeding guilty of the contemning of his name, and he pronounceth a ſad ſentence againſt them, *viz.* that he will tranſfer his church, and remove it from them; and tells them, That he will get a people among the Gentiles, *that his name ſhall be great among;* and he gives the reaſon of the juſtneſs of this ſentence, and the reaſon is, *Becauſe they have profaned his name.* Now, they might reply, How had they profaned it? And he proves it. (1.) By their expreſſion: And then, (2.) By their deeds. They concluded that the temple of the Lord

Lord was polluted, by what it had been, the expreſſions that he proves it by, and ſo they needed not to ſtand what to offer; ſo they thought that ought would ſuffice, to be an offering offered thereon, ſo here there deeds that they proved by. But we would come and obſerve ſome things anent the reaſons of the cauſe of the juſtneſs of his controverſy. And,

1. Obſerve, That the juſtice of the Lord's controverſy with a people, within a viſible church, is ill to be ſeen, when the cauſe is not condeſcended upon, and laid to heart; ſo, it is the duty of that people that he is contending with, to be often putting up their ſuit to God, and aſking that queſtion, Why contendeſt thou ſo ſore? I do not mean by quarrelling, but by aſking humbly the cauſes of his anger. Alas! the cauſes why the Lord hath contended with us theſe many years have been little inquired into: The Lord hath been hovering over Scotland for a long time, and hath been keeping up and carrying on a controverſy with the inhabitants of this land, and if we were not blind, we might ſee our ſins written on our judgments. So that it is clear here, that neceſſary truths are oft-times ill heard, and therefore muſt be oft inculcated; for they are not to be paſt without obſervation. What is it that ye have polluted and profaned my name by, in bringing polluted bread to offer upon mine altar? This is connection being repeated, what need (ye will ſay) is there to have it repeated? It is to ſhew, that oft-times the moſt neceſſary truth is worſt heard, and leaſt heeded. Whence we will inſtruct this leſſon, that ſuch is the unperceivingneſs of people, that live under the drop of God's word for a long time, and hear very wakening truths, and yet not hear, ſo as to regard or lay it to heart. Their hearts are harder than a ſtone; for water, dropping often upon a flint, will make a hollow-place therein, but the hardneſs of mens hearts is ſuch, that they grow more hard: and ſo it is needful, that neceſſary truths be often inculcated. Few or none of you dare ſay, but ye have got the ſinful way of this generation told you; I ſay, it hath been often told you: But what have ye done? What have ye done with theſe warnings? How have ye carried under theſe? I think the half of the preaching, that have been in teſtifying againſt theſe courſes of ceſs and locality paying, and againſt joining with enemies, might have convinced all Scotland of the evil and ſin of theſe ways. But, O how little hath this been heard or regarded! at leaſt by many of this generation.

2. Obſerve, That the corrupting of God's worſhip, and ſlighting of performances, is a profanation of the Lord's name. How doth he reckon or evince this! Becauſe they ſaid, *That the table of the Lord was polluted;* and ſo they would not care what they brought to offer, even any thing

they thought would ſerve; but remember, that he will not hold ſuch guiltleſs of profaning his name: And remember this, that the following of the courſes of this ſinful generation, and the going into, and hearing of theſe hirelings, who have run unſent, and joining with them, is a profaning of his name, and a breach of his day, and ye will be held as guilty. It is true, ye may eſcape the puniſhment of men, but ye ſhall not eſcape the puniſhment of God, if ye repent not. For I do declare, That the going in to hear theſe curates, and obeying them in their ſinful commandments, is a profaning of the name of the Lord; for, by ſo doing, they mock God, and ſlight the performances that they ought to do. And, alas! many folks prayers are an abomination to God, and is crying for vengeance as the return of their prayers, becauſe they mock God by them, in that they pray for the Lord's returning again to this land: And, in the mean time, by their practice, they join with all the abominations of the time; and by ſo doing, they do all that they can to keep him away, that he may not return to this land again. And thus they take his name in vain, by mocking him with their prayers, as they call them. O ſinful prayers! remember that ſuch are guilty of the breach of the third commandment, for taking of the Lord's name in vain; and for this he will not hold them guiltleſs: For he is a jealous God, and in no ways will be mocked, but he will diſdain theſe prayers.

3. Obſerve, That as they had given evidence of their profaning the Lord's name, by their expreſſions, ſo he proves that they had given evidence of it by their deeds, (which is a confirming of the juſtice of his ſentence againſt them;) for here they made no conſcience of his ſervice, but brought any thing for an offering that came to their hand, and this he appeals to themſelves; *For*, ſaith the Lord, *offer it now unto thy governor, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept of thy perſon?* for it is very odious, and makes the ſervice of God contemptible, when they that do it, weary of it. He rejoiceth to ſee a willing people ſerve him willingly: He forbade that the bread of mourners ſhould come into his houſe, ſo then, he would not have people going heartleſsly about his ſervice, as it were their burden, but as their duty, with delight and pleaſure. But ye will ſay, What can be the reaſon or cauſe of this, that his ſervice is ſo wearied of? For anſwer, As I am ſure that many of you are guilty of this, of wearying of his yoke and ſervice, ſo I will ſhew you ſome of the cauſes thereof. And,

(1.) The firſt cauſe is the want of the awe and impreſſion of God upon their ſpirit; and where this is wanting, and there is not a right fear and reverence of God, there will ſoon be

be a wearying of the ſervice of God: But, where the impreſſion of his authority is upon the heart, this will guard the heart from this wearying.

(2.) The ſecond cauſe is, they find no ſweetneſs, comfort or delight in his ſervice, and ſo it becomes weariſome unto them. But, how comes this? It doth not come from his part, nor from the nature of his ſervice; for, his way is delightſome and pleaſant, but the cauſe is in your part, in that ye ſerve him ſo coldrifely, and this begets more coldrifeneſs; for he that prays coldrifely to God, by this provokes God to give him a denial, and to with-hold his preſence from him: Folk that weary in his ſervice need not think but that will beget more wearineſs; and then they ſee many diſcouragements in that way, and this diſheartens them, and they find no ſweetneſs or delight in it, and ſo they weary. O ſet to ſeriouſly, and reſt not till ye get all theſe clouds removed, and that ye be brought to find ſweetneſs and delight in his way, and then ye will cry out, with the diſciples upon the mount, *That it is good to here.*

(3.) The third cauſe is, becauſe they deſpond of his mercy. O deſpond not of his mercy. I think no wonder, that ſo many have no love, reverence, nor delight in the ſervice of God, conſidering how they deſpond of God's mercy; but if ye would aſk how ye ſhall walk before him, without wearying of his ſervice? I would tell you, to ſtudy to walk before him with fear and reverence, and deſpone not of his mercy; and do not provoke him to draw back the gracious out-lettings of his love and grace, that have been ſweet and refreſhing to you; for, where theſe things are not ſtudied, there is nothing of this ſweetneſs or comfort felt, or enjoyed, and therefrom is a wearineſs procured, and a ſnuffing at the ordinances; ſo then, as he proved the profaning of his name by their expreſſions, ſo he proves it by their deeds, for they wearied at the multitude of their ſacrifices.

4. Obſerve, That when a people give way to themſelves thus to weary, in the ſervice and worſhip of God, then there is one of two effects that it will produce: For, (1.) It ſhall either make them to quit and give up with the performance of duty altogether: or, (2.) It ſhall have this effect, that they ſhall go about the exerciſe of his worſhip, ſo overly and ſlightly, that they ſhall not care how they get it over. Remember this, ye that weary of his ſervice; it is a wonder that ye do not quit with the form of it alſo; for, it is ſadly ſeen this day, that many have quit all the form of religion: Wearying in the ſervice and worſhip of God begets more of this, and ſo this, continued in practice, provokes God to ſuffer them to renounce all; and this is ſeen in many, that ſeemed to be ſomewhat before: But if ye be not left to give up with

duty altogether, ye will regard how ye put your duty by hand. I am ſure ſome of your conſciences will bear witneſs to the truth of this, that when ye go to pray, due care is not ſtudied how to go about prayer, ſo as to worſhip and ſerve God in the Spirit: But any way pleaſeth you, if ye get it by, and then your carnal ſecure minds take reſt, and get no ſatisfaction again; whereas, I am ſure, that they that are right ſervers of God will be as careful in the manner as in the matter of his ſervice, with a ſpirit of holy and tender zeal, with an eye to his glory in all that they do: And this will coſt much more work than ever they found in the matter of his ſervice. But they brought any thing, and thought it would ſerve; they brought polluted bread and offered, and wherefore was it? Becauſe they ſaid, the table of the Lord was contemptible. They thought that the beauty and purity thereof was not as had been, and ſo they concluded, that any thing would ſerve for an offering, ſo as this confirms the juſtice of the Lord's charge of profaning his name.

5 Obſerve, That the Lord requires, that there be no diſcord betwixt the inner man and the outward man: If thou offer the torn, is it not evil? And if thou offer the lame, is it not evil! It was forbidden under the law, to bring the torn and the lame, as an offering to the altar; ſo there muſt likewiſe be an agreement betwixt the inner and the outward man. It was alſo forbidden to bring the ſick of the flock, ſignifying, that he will not have the drooping and languiſhing ſervice that many have to give. But that is not the ſervice that he will accept of, ſo beware of bringing the ſick as an offering: Beware of a diſcouraged and languiſhing way of ſerving him, and beware of a diſagreement betwixt the outer and inner man, for he calls for both to be cordial in his ſervice. O up with your head, therefore, and be cheerful in his ſervice. It ſhould be our element to ſerve him, as the freſh air is to the beaſts, and the water to the fiſhes; we ſhould be ſo, that we could not leave out of his ſervice. O for ſuch a ſight of him, as would make it ſo! and this would be reward enough for the hardeſt taſk he puts us to, although there was no reward of free grace after this.

6. Obſerve, They that weary of the Lord's ſervice will ſoon quit the conſcience that is appealing to them: *Offer this to thy governor, will he be pleaſed with thee, or accept thy perſon?* When conſcience ſpeaks, That it was not you, ſo ye will find that your conſcience will be an awe-band. Is it not ſtrange, that ſo many profeſſed, not long ſince, to be ſerving and following him, even under the croſs, that their practice is now turned to the quite contrary; but I will not think ſtrange of it; for, ſuch as weary of ſerving him will ſoon ſlight the voice of their conſcience, or they will quit altogether, and

he

he will quit them; and then, when God leaves them, their caſe is miſerable. It is a ſad word from God to a ſoul, *Let him alone, he is joined to his idols. But curſed be the deceiver which hath in his flock a male, and ſacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing.*

7. Obſerve, That the ſentence that was pronounced againſt theſe, that were the corrupters of God's ſervice, was chiefly againſt the deceiver and the hypocrite; they pretend much zeal and love, make vows, and pay, and reſolve and perform: But, what was it that they brought? It was but a corrupt thing, the refuſe of what they had, that they had brought. They were juſt like many of this generation, that have no ill to venture their beſt things in the ſervice of God, they will be lothe to venture the beſt of their nolt and ſheep for the cauſe of Chriſt, but think that any thing may ſerve, and ſo there is a curſe pronounced againſt them: *Curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and offereth a corrupt thing to the Lord.*

8. Obſerve, That let ſlighters of God's worſhip and ſervice be as good as they will, in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others, yet they are under the hard ſentence of God's heavy curſe: *Curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male.* But many will not believe this, theſe that go into the hireling curates the wrath and the curſe of God ſhall be upon them, if they continue in that courſe without repentance. Therefore, as I deſire that ye would flee from the curſe pronounced by the Lord in his word, I deſire that ye would flee from the camps of theſe men; for, as the fire devoured the camps of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, ſo ſhall the fire of God's wrath burn up the camps of theſe men: So, as Moſes warned the children of Iſrael to flee from the camps of theſe wicked men, ſo, in the name of the Lord, I tell you to flee from the camps of theſe hirelings; Shall ye eſcape by iniquity? No: Ye ſhall not eſcape; for, when the Lord is bringing on judgments on the land, for ſin and falling from him, think ye to be ſaved under this gourd? Perſuade yourſelves no: There is many a ſtorm, that ſeems to be coming on ſore and ſharp. Many think they would go a day or two to the kirk, to prevent the ſtroke; but remember, that will make the deluge of wrath greater to you; do not think that ye ſhall eſcape by ſinful means; for God ſhall diſcover all theſe gourds, and overturn all theſe ſhelters that many take *Curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and offereth a corrupt thing to the Lord.*

9. Obſerve, That the wrongs that are done to God out of a pretence of zeal and godlineſs, are theſe that are moſt heinous in his ſight; their hypocriſy and out-ſide of holineſs, and other ſeeming integrities and zeal that they had, and yet they are curſed with a curſe, becauſe that it was under the pre-

pretence of zeal and forwardneſs, for he was thereby moſt diſhonoured. And this is the leſſon that we would learn from it, That of all the wrongs that is done againſt God, theſe are moſt abhorring to him, that are under the pretence of zeal to his name and way. O! have a care that ye run not off at the right-hand, under the pretence of zeal and forwardneſs for him; for ſuch zeal and forwardneſs is heinous in his ſight, and injurious to him, though ſomething in it may ſeem to be right; for, as it is wrong and a ſin, under any pretence to offend the Lord, yet this hath a great aggravation in it, when it is done under the pretence of love to, and zeal for the Lord. Therefore ſtudy and labour to beware of all ſin; but this eſpecially, that is palliate and covered with the pretence of love, zeal, and ſeeming ſerioufneſs. O take warning! ye ſee what they did, that went off from us under the pretence of zeal and forwardneſs for him, that the Lord hath taken away that zeal, that they were maſked with, and diſcovered their way to be moſt injurious to him: and he will alſo diſcover theſe, that this day are covering their injuriouſneſs to him, with the pretence of love, zeal, and forwardneſs for him,

10 Obſerve, That it cannot but be a great injury againſt God, and procure a curſe when people employ not their beſt things in his ſervice. This is clear from verſe 14. *Curſed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and ſacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.* So men that employ not their beſt things in the Lord's ſervice, believe it they are chargeable with this; he calls for your beſt things in his ſervice, and not that ye ſhould ſpend that upon your luſts. Ye are called to employ the beſt of your time in his ſervice, and many of you give him but the refuſe of your time; or at beſt he gets but your by time for his ſervice. But ye ſhould give him the beſt of your time and ſtrength, and your hearts; all ſhould be employed in his ſervice. Do not ſay that ye do the beſt that ye can, for I am perſuaded, that there is none of you, but ye may do more for him than ye do. And do not ſay, that ye improve the talent that he hath given you to trade with, for ye but miſimprove it; and the beſt of you, we fear, come ſhort of improving it, for if ye improved it, ye ſhould find it increaſe upon your hand, and ye would more appear like his children. But becauſe people do not improve their time, and their abilities to lay them out for God, it procures a curſe; for though our obligations go far beyond our duties, that we do, yet when we do not lay out all our abilities for him, and do not beſtow our love, our affection and our time, and all that we have for him, but beſtow them upon other things, we procure his curſe.

Young folk ſet to the work, and be intreated to give up yourſelves to his ſervice, and employ your beſt things for him; now

now when your desires are fresh and quick. O! will ye bestow them on precious Christ! ye have a brave prize put in your hand, if ye set right to the work; ye may see Zion's King come back, and the crown set upon his head again, Now, there is two reasons given, wherefore they should not profane his name: (1.) Because he is a great King: (2.) Because his name is dreadful among the heathen.

11. Observe, That the great reason of peoples slighting of God's worship and service, is the want of the impression of the greatness, sovereignty, and power of God: People win not to right thoughts of him; and therefore think, that any time may serve, or that any service is good enough and any sacrifice may suffice to offer. But, will ye know, sirs, that he is a great King; great men, and kings on earth, require more service, than this great King and Lord gets from many; I do not mean these corrupt men, that calls themselves so; but these that are such. They require and get more service, than this great Lord gets; who is the KING OF KINGS And thus he brings in Israel; *offer this now to thy governor, would he accept thy person?* No certainly. If ye were employed to stand before kings, and to do them service, ye would have other preparations for it, and would wait with other attendance diligently and obediently, than now ye do. Ye think to escape this stroke from his hand, that the injurers and profaners of his name will meet with, when he will avenge himself on all such. O! remember this, ye corrupt and carnal worshippers, that he is a great King, and that he will not pass by such injurers and profaners of his name; but he will avenge himself upon you suddenly.

Now, will not this cause you to seek after more seriousness in his service? Remember that the carnal and formal worshippers will be charged with profanation of his name, as well as the grosly wicked, though they do not make such open proclamation of profaning his name before the world as these do. Remember this, that he is a great King, and will not sit with the wrongs done to his name, but will be avenged on you suddenly.

12. Observe, That the Lord is dreadful among the heathen, the respect that heathens bear to the name of God, by reason, of his common providence, in what they conceive of him darkly therein, may be sufficient to condemn all that have a profession of him. O the respect the very heathens bear to his name! and the impression that they have of a deity, may be sufficient to witness against the professed worshippers of him: So that the Lord makes use of the stedfastness of the heathen, when pleading with his people for their unfixedness: *For*, saith he, *pass over the isles of Chittim, and see if there be such a thing, that they have changed their gods, which yet are no gods:*

gods: But my people have changed their glory. The heathen then continued ſtedfaſt in the worſhip of their falſe gods, and they have even ſome impreſſion of a deity on them; but a people that is under a profeſſion of the name of the true God, will turn to a corrupt worſhip. Shall not the heathen ſtand up and witneſs againſt ſuch in this land? May not the Lord bring in Turks and Barbarians, to witneſs againſt many in this generation? O contemners and ſlighters of God's worſhip! it ſhall be more tolerable in the day of Judgment, for them than for you. And this will be the caſe of many, that little know this. But, oh! *who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations.*

SERMON XXXI.

ISAIAH iii. 10.

Say ye to the righteous, that it ſhall be well with him.

THERE are ſeveral queſtions of great weight, which we ſhould be oft aſking, that are of ſoul-concernment; as that, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Do ye know what this is, to be put to much exerciſe, and great diligence about your ſoul's caſe? this flows not from paſſing and tranſient thoughts of Chriſt, but from a heart work, and a humble work. O! think, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* It is ſadly to be feared, that there are ſome folk, that never aſk the queſtion at their own hearts, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* And there are ſome, when they ſet about this work, in ſome caſe, they do make themſelves by their overly ſeeking, to be ſtill under a ſecure ſilent condition; and, if they go to ſeek the charter of their ſoul's aſſurance, they ſatisfy themſelves very eaſily, and they are content to have it written in ſuch ſmall letters, that they can hardly win to diſcern or read them; but Chriſtians ſhould ſeek to have the evidences of their aſſurance drawn and ingraven in great and grave letters, ſeeing this is the only thing needful, that we are called to make ſure in time.

A ſecond queſtion, that we ſhould be ſetting about, and ſtudying to know, and that is, How to know God, and to have the ſoul brought under high contemplations of him? The

The beauty of him ſhould make us love and admire him, and praiſe him: This will be the motto, that the believer will be forced to put upon him, *He is matchleſs and every way tranſcendantly glorious.* Look how he is brought in by the Spirit, Iſa. ix 6 *Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of peace.* And look how he is brought in by John, Rev. xix. 16. *KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.* So that his properties and ſtyles cannot be ſet out by the believer: And therefore with the ſpouſe, they muſt declare him *matchleſs, and altogether lovely.*

And there is a third qneſtion, that ye ſhould be oft aſking at your own hearts, and it is this, *What ſhall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits to me?* Are ye ſo ſenſeleſs, that ye know not that ye have your being of him? Are ye not made to wonder at the condeſcenſion of our Lord, in all the ſteps of his goodneſs? A ſoul, when right with God, will read mercies out of the greateſt of judgments: Jacob was made to ſay, *I am leſs than the leaſt of all thy mercies.* And I will tell you, a quarrelling diſpoſition with God, is far from a gracious diſpoſition.

And, a fourth queſtion that ye ſhould be often aſking, and it is your duty to be ſeeking much of the Lord's mind in it; and it is this, *Watchman, watchman, what of the night?* The anſwer is, *The morning cometh, and alſo the night* We are in the night with it this day; but there is a darker night coming, when the Lord ſhall draw forth his bright ſword: It is furbiſhed that it may glitter, and it ſhall be put in the hand of the ſlayer, when he ſhall paſs through the breadth and length of the land, and deſtroy and lay waſte the ſinners of his people; that will be a dark night. But, believe this, the church will have glorious days, when the Lord comes back to his church in the latter days, to reſtore the ſolemn feaſts; when every one ſhall dwell ſafely, under his own vine, and Iſrael ſhall no more dwell in tents. O! if this were believed, a ſight of theſe days, by faith, would create more courage in his people's hearts, reſolutely to face the ſtorm. Conſidering what he will bring with him, of the power of the goſpel, this will make all the ſwellings of Jordan to appear but little, although it ſhould overflow all its banks. And, however, in this portion of ſcripture, the Lord hath certified and aſſerted, that come what will, *it ſhall be well with the righteous.*

Now, from the words read, I would draw theſe two obſervations:

1. The firſt obſervation is this, That it is a miniſter's duty to divide the Lord's word aright. Here ye ſee Iſaiah gets his commiſſion from the Lord, to tell the righteous for their encouragement, *that it ſhall be well with them:* And likewiſe to

tell the wicked, that wo and wrath was abiding them, and that *it ſhould be ill with them*. This was Paul's charge to Timothy, that he ſhould ſtudy to *divide the Lord's word rightly*, 2 Tim. ii. 15. For the clearing of the meaning of this; it is to apply promiſes to whom promiſes belong, and threatnings to whom threatnings are due. Miniſters ſhould excuſe or palliate ſin in no perſon, of whatſoever degree, as ye may ſee frequently from ſcripture, from the Lord's commiſſion to his ſervants, that they be faithful ſtewards in his houſe, in dividing his word faithfully. In effect I ſhall ſay this word from it, the failing that hath been in this time, in not dividing the Lord's word faithfully, hath made his church a broken and divided church, which if the word had been faithfully divided, and ſeaſonably applied, our rents and diviſions, and ſubdiviſions, had not been ſuch as they are this day: But there have been ſome that came, and pretended to carry the Lord's meſſage; that have ſpoken and proclaimed peace to them, that capitulate with the Lord's open and avowed enemies, and ſtrengthned their hands, by their fainting, to bear the Lord's banner, and taking the lee-ſide of the brae, and ſo the fall of many hath been occaſioned thereby. Oh! what ſhall theſe be likned unto, that ſhould have been builders with others in the houſe of God? There is nothing that they can reſemble more, than a company of builders at an houſe, where there are ſome building, and ſome caſting down: And ſo the miniſters of Scotland are ſuch; there was one party building, and another party caſting down; and ſo, when theſe that were building ſaw, that the reſt caſt down what they builded, they began to caſt down as faſt as the reſt, and ſo the building is come to a ruinous heap. Or, they may be compared to men rowing in a boat, and the wind becomes contrary, and the ſtorm riſes: and ere they weary themſelves to get the boat brought to the harbour, they would rather quit their work and let the boat periſh. And ſo this day ye are ſcattered without ſhepherds to feed the flock: And what the Lord ſaid to Hoſea, may be applied to, and ſaid of the men of theſe practices, Hoſea iv. 6. *My people are deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.* And this is not our obſervation only, but their own, that when they that ſhould feed Chriſt's flock deny to do it, they thereby provoke the Lord to deny their children of ſpiritual food: We ſee ſomething of this already.

2. The ſecond obſervation is this, That in this commiſſion that Iſaiah gets, to ſay to the righteous, *that it ſhould be well with them*, we ſee, that when the Lord threatens ſinners moſt with judgments, he doth not forget to comfort his own people. This prophet from the beginning of this chapter, ſhews, that he will take away the prophet, and the captain, and the elo-

eloquent orator; and then, in a word, that he will bring a general judgment upon all, ſo that none ſhall eſcape: Yet he forgets not a promiſe of comfort to his own; *Say ye to the righteous, that it ſhall be well with him.* O! if we could ſtand ſtill, and admire the condeſcendency of God, that he will not bring a ſtroke upon the wicked till he warn his people of it; Ye will ſee a proof of this in the ninth of Ezekiel; for then, when he had determined that he would bring a general ſtroke upon the city, he gave a charge, that there ſhould be nothing done, until all the mourners be marked; and not only ſo, but when the ſentence was put in execution, he gave a charge to the men with the ſlaughtering weapons, that they ſhould not touch or come near any that had the mark. O! how wonderful is his condeſcendency and kindneſs? He is ſometimes ſo kind to, and familiar with his people, that he will give them a ſight of their captivity, with the ſight of a promiſe in the boſom of it, for their out-gate: He dealt thus with his diſciples, when he foretold them of his going away; *for*, ſays he, *I will ſee you again, and your hearts ſhall rejoice.* For he knew that the news of his departure was ſad and heavy to them, and therefore he promiſed, that he would come again, and pay them a viſit. Whence we ſee, that the Lord allows comfort to his own people in the ſaddeſt of times; and he will have them comforted, and he will have it told them: This is clear, from Iſaiah xl 12. *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, ſaith your God; ſpeak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accompliſhed; that her iniquity is pardoned.* And he forwarns the wicked of what ſhall befal them alſo.

3 The third obſervation that I would notice is this. That the righteous man is the only happy man, becauſe that he hath the promiſe of life eternal: And not only ſo, but he hath the promiſe of all that the Lord ſees needful for him in this preſent life. Who is the man, that will get all the promiſes made out to him? Only the righteous man: They ſhall be brought to ſit on thrones, and to walk in white: They ſhall be kings and prieſts to God, and the Lamb. This is only given to the righteous perſon: All the promiſes in this life, and the life to come, the righteous may claim to them as their own, Pſalm lxxxiv. 11. *No good thing will he with hold from them that walk uprightly.*

But, perhaps, ye will ſay, How can this conſiſt with the caſe of his people? For we ſee that the Lord is giving us ground to take up that complaint, *that the wicked are ſpreading themſelves like a green bay-tree*, and that all that their hearts can wiſh, when his people are reduced to great ſtraits. But though this be true, yet it conſiſts very well with the pro-

miſes; for if the Lord ſaw not this good for his people, that they be emptied from veſſel to veſſel, for their being made meet for heaven, he had never reduced them to ſuch ſtraits: But he is wiſe who hath ſaid, Rom. viii. 28 *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* He can give them the hundred-fold in the hardeſt of their conditions. Dare ye not ſay, ye who have peace with him in your own conſciences, that ye have found this to be true, that ye have found the feaſt of fat things, of wines well refined upon the lees, in your hardeſt lot, when all other things have been but as trifles to you.

But, perhaps, ye will ſay, How doth it conſiſt with the promiſes, when his people are dragged to priſons and to ſcaffolds every day, and are made to undergo the hardeſt and ſharpeſt of ſufferings? Yet though all this be true, it ſtands very well with his promiſes; for, is he not their light and their life, and has not his ſtrength been forth-coming to them? whereas he hath ſaid, *When they go through the rivers they ſhall not overflow them, and when they walk through the fire they ſhall not be burnt.* Hath he not made out this promiſe to many a poor thing, that, no doubt, hath ſaid, *Their lines are fallen to them in pleaſant places?* We doubt not, but his preſence hath been ſo manifeſted to his people, that even enemies themſelves have wiſhed that their latter end might be like theirs; although, like Balaam, they will not live their life. And ſo the Lord cauſeth the prophet to proclaim this, *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him.*

But for the better underſtanding of theſe words.

I I ſhall ſhew you, who is the righteous man. And then,

II Shall give you ſome evidences for clearing of this: But I ſhall be very brief.

I. As to the firſt, Who is the righteous man? And how ſhall I know whether this promiſe belongs to me or not? I anſwer, The righteous man is he that hath fled to Chriſt for righteouſneſs; that is, the man that hath apprehended Chriſt for his righteouſneſs. Obſerve it, till ye be in union with Chriſt, there is not a promiſe in all the Bible for you; for, there is none that can open this book, that is faſt ſealed, but only Chriſt; and can let out of his promiſes to his people. It is ſaid, Rev. v. 4. *That John wept becauſe no man was found worthy to open, and to read the book, until Chriſt, the lion of the tribe of Judah, prevailed to open the book, and to looſe the ſeven ſeals thereof.* So then, believe it, that the book is ſealed till once ye be in union with Chriſt; and then, when Chriſt is yours, all is yours, and ye are righteous folk: For, it is theſe who have fled to him, and have union with him, that are the only righteous. O labour to make this ſure, that ye are u-

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nited unto Chriſt by faith, and married to him by covenant! Remember, that till then, ye can perform no duty acceptable to God: And there are four ſorts of folk that I would propoſe this unto, to try themſelves by. And,

1. The firſt ſort are thoſe, that are not ſenſible of their own condition; that know not what it is to be convinced of ſin, and of their ſoul's deſtruction for ſin, and that ſee not the ſword of juſtice drawn above their heads, for a broken law, until Chriſt came and interpoſed in their room: And ſo conſider, ye that are in that caſe, that never knew what it was, to dwell half an hour under deſpairing thoughts about your ſouls, ye have never known what it is to come to Chriſt, as ſeeing yourſelves under the curſe of the law. I ſay, whatever ye may imagine in a goſpel way, that ye may look at, in order to your in-bringing to himſelf; yet this is ſure, that ye muſt make uſe of as much of the law work, as ſhall diſcover to you, what ye are by nature.

2. The ſecond ſort are ye who reſt on purpoſes and reſolutions to grow better, but never bring your purpoſes the length of practices. Remember this, that Balaam had good purpoſes and intentions, who prayed to the Lord, that he might *die the death of the righteous, and that his latter end might be like theirs.* Remember alſo, what ſtrong reſolutions and purpoſes Peter had, when Chriſt was foretelling that they ſhould all leave him, he cried out, *That although all ſhould deny him, yet he would not do it;* yet, ye know, Peter was the firſt that fell foully: Therefore I would ſay, that reſolutions reſted on, and purpoſes and intentions to grow better, when they are not brought the length of practices, ſpeak out this, that they are none of the righteous that the Lord is here comforting againſt trials and ſtraits.

3. The third ſort that I would name are theſe that are reſting on duties without Chriſt, there is not a promiſe in all the ſcripture to ſuch. O! ſay ſome, What need I fear, or be at ſo much pains, for if I neglect not reading and praying, and opportunities of that kind, what will ail me? But remember this, that there are many ſuch hypocrites, that are among the damned in hell, that have been very forward in external duties: Ye know what the Phariſee ſaid, when he went up to the temple to pray, and began to commend himſelf to God, by the good deeds he had done, thanking him, that he was not like others, or like the Publican. Ye ſee alſo what Paul ſays of himſelf, when out of Chriſt, that he was a very trim legal man; and yet ye ſee, for as good a conceit as Paul had of himſelf, and of his zeal that made him perſecute the church, yet he tells in another place, when once he ſaw the law-work, and had the right conviction of ſin, then he calls himſelf, *the chief of ſinners.*

4. The

4. The fourth ſort are theſe who crucify convictions, and rely on created graces: They ever think it is well, becauſe they had a calling of this ſort: Therefore they croſs their convictions, and fight againſt their conſciences to get them quieted. But remember this, that every challenge is not ſaving; ye may come through many challenges, and may get the conſcience quieted and calmed, and yet not be a ſaving work of grace. Many have had many challenges, flowing from the common operations of the Spirit; as Judas, who had challenges enough for betraying innocent blood, yet no work of ſaving grace: It is true, that his challenges were ſuch, that he could not get his conſcience calmed again: But however I will ſay this, unleſs your convictions produce a real hatred of ſin, and a lothing of yourſelves, and a fleeing into Chriſt, they are not ſaving convictions. It is true, Chriſt is the end of the law to them that believe: Convictions may be made uſe of by the Lord, in a ſovereign way, as he pleaſeth; but they, in themſelves, wanting this character and mark, a hatred at ſin, and a real deſire to get God's wrath pacified, through the merits of Chriſt, it is naught. Now, this is the language of faith, yet it hath another language, *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf; but in me is thy help.* Moſes himſelf was not ſufficient to carry forth the children of Iſrael out of Egypt, through the wilderneſs; but Chriſt behoved to be employed, as the ſpiritual rock they drank of, to keep them from fainting. So there muſt be a conſtant travelling of the ſoul, betwixt Moſes and Chriſt. It is the greateſt ſubtility and willineſs of Satan, that cauſeth men to rely upon convictions: For, believe it, that it cannot be the evidence or ground of true ſaving grace. It is always the unchangeable love of God in Chriſt, that is to be depended upon, for what is all created grace, but like the truſting in the arm of fleſh. But remember this, while out of Chriſt, no promiſes made to the righteous will ſerve your turn. *But ſay to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him.*

But, who are the righteous? Only ſuch are they, as have communion with God. And here ye may know your union with him, by the communion that ye have with him: And if it were aſked at you, what is it, that your hearts are going out after through the day? And what is it that ye have moſt communion with? We fear if conſcientiouſly anſwered, that it is with Belial, and the works of darkneſs; he that gives way to the world, and to his luſts and idols, and is keeping fellowſhip with them, and is not crying out with Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with idols?* is none of the righteous But there are ſome that think, that they can ſerve God and idols both; they will give one part of their hearts to him,

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and another to the world, and their idols in it; but he hath told us, that there is no concord betwixt Chriſt and Belial.

But, to make it more clear, conſider theſe evidences: For as theſe that are ſettling upon their lees, and purſuing the world, are far from having union with Chriſt: So theſe are the evidences of ſuch as have union with him:

(1.) The man, or the woman, that hath union with Chriſt, they have a real antipathy at every ſin, becauſe the fear of God remains in their heart: It is not a hatred at ſome ſins, that are averſe to their nature, but a hatred at all ſins, eſpecially that ſin, that their nature is moſt inclined unto. It was David's endeavour to keep himſelf from his own iniquity, Pſalm xviii. 23.

(2.) They that have union with Chriſt, they know by experience, that faith is the inſtrumental cauſe of that union, becauſe it is only by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, that the believer is helped to this; but ye that know not how ye wan by faith, have reaſon to queſtion that your faith is not ſound. Therefore, there is no union with Chriſt without faith: Ye will readily ſay that ye believe, and that ye have faith: But, how came ye by it? Ye cannot tell: But I tell you, that faith which ye brought to the world with you, ſhall not carry you far. But the man that hath union with Chriſt, he can tell of the difficulty of believing; and how hard a work he had ere he wan at his faith. Chriſtianity is a myſtery indeed, to the Chriſtian, to win at: But to ſuch only this is that which ſtrengthens their faith, that Chriſt is the Author and Finiſher thereof. Therefore I would lay this from it, that ye that know not the difficulty of believing, ye know not what it is to believe.

(3.) Thoſe that have union with Chriſt, this is an evidence of it, that he only is precious to them; according to that word, 1 Peter ii. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.* They that believe they have a high deſignation to give him; and their eſtimation of him is above all things. So ye that find your hearts much after other things, and are ready to forget him; he hath never been ſeen to be precious to you. Ye have never win to know, what it was to dwell under the refreſhing thoughts of him and his love: And to come with him from Lebanon. And if an abſent Chriſt be thus lovely; what muſt his preſence be? Indeed when he is preſent, a ſoul will not win to get all his properties commended; but this, that *he is altogether lovely.* And ye that know not what it is to have his lovelineſs engraven upon your hearts, know not what it is to believe in him, and to have union with him: But, *to them that belive he is precious.*

(4.) They that have union with Chriſt, they are *longing for communion with him, and without interruption: The Spirit and*

and the Bride ſays, Come; and the loving ſoul, that hath union with him, ſays, *Even ſo, come quickly.* It was thus with Paul, *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of death?* This put him to a ſtrait, deſiring to be diſſolved, that he might win to enjoy communion with him without any interruption. Have ye not been at this, to have a thirſting and longing to be freed from a preſent life, that ye might win to enjoy him? O happy ſoul! that from a real ground can ſay this, that this is the thing, that would make him to be content to be abſent from the body, *viz.* that he might be preſent with the Lord.

But I ſhall name this as the laſt and ſum of all in it; that theſe who are united to Chriſt, they have faith, and it is ſuch a faith as purifies the heart: There is nothing but Chriſt that lives and reigns in the ſoul; they are helped to trample upon principalities and powers; the world and their luſts, and Chriſt is become the only deſire of their ſoul: But ye that ſay ye have union with him, and yet keep and entertain your idols in your boſom, I would aſk this, where is your holineſs? for, faith employs him, not only for juſtification, but for ſanctification and cleanſing alſo.

Now I ſhall ſpeak a word to two ſorts of people,

Ye that can lay hold on theſe marks and evidences, do not doubt him, although, as to human appearances, he ſhould ſeem to croſs his promiſes; for he that hath begun a good work of grace in the ſoul ſhall carry it on, for his work is perfect; therefore ſpend more time in bleſſing and praiſing him, and in believing on him: For the enemies in the midſt of all their proſperity, cannot have the ſatisfaction that ye may have, he is inviting you to come and take your fill of love: Is he not crying, *Behold me, behold me?* And holding out his arms, and bidding all come; and every one that will let him come, and he is begging upon his knees, as it were, that you would come unto him, and partake of his rich ſalvation.

But poſſibly ſome will ſay, I am a poor ſinner, will he accept of me, that is ſo vile and polluted? I anſwer to this, I will tell thee in his name, that it is ſuch he is ſeeking: And although thou be black like the tents of Kedar, yet thou ſhalt be made comely like the curtains of Solomon. It is not the penitent only, but the impenitent that he invites to come; the greater thy ſin be, the greater neceſſity thou haſt of him. And I promiſe you, in his name, that ye ſhall not be the unwelcomer to him that your ſin is great; for, we never hear that Chriſt upbraided any heinous ſinners for coming to him. But, on the contrary, his ſerious intreaties are uſed, and he hereby regrets, that ſinners will not come to him that they might have life. This made him weep over Jeruſalem and ſay, *How often would I have gathered you, as a hen gathereth her chick-*

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ens, and ye would not, therefore let not this be your excuſe; let not the greatneſs of your ſins hold you away; for, altho' ye had all the ſins, that all within this place are guilty of, yet I, in his name, promiſe you, ye ſhall be welcome to him, and that this ſhall not keep you away. Come, and regret your caſe to him, for it is only he that can help you out of that condition. Seek a heart to repent, and grace to believe in his name, that he that is God, that juſtifieth the ungodly, may juſtify you.

Now there are two or three words of uſe, and I ſhall only name them.

Uſe 1. Is of reproof to them, that are at no pains to get it known that they are righteous, and have an intereſt in the promiſes. What a poor portion have they, that will not be at pains to come to him: Ye have not a right to this promiſe, that it ſhall be well with you; but the wrath of God ſhall ſeize upon you, and ye ſhall be joined to the company of devils and damned ſpirits to all eternity. Therefore take this exhortation, and let not him be provoked to ſay of you, *Bring theſe murderers, and ſlay them before me, that would not that I ſhould reign over them.* Lay to heart and conſider what ye will ſay, when that ſentence ſhall be pronounced againſt you, *Depart from me, ye curſed*, &c. Remember, that ye are now invited to come and cloſe the bargain with him; and if ye refuſe, there is not a promiſe in all the Bible for you; no, not from the firſt of Geneſis to the laſt of the Revelation, that ſhall be for your comfort. But I, in his name, do denounce eternal wrath againſt you: And, what will ye anſwer? Will ye ſend the anſwer of Pharaoh, which he gave to Moſes, *Who is the Lord that I ſhould obey him?* Well, if this be your reſolution, gird up your loins, and make yourſelves ſtrong, and put on your harneſs; for ye ſhall not boaſt when ye put it off again; ye ſhall not boaſt of your victory: Remember that ye have an angry God for your party.

Uſe 2. Is of reproof alſo, to a generation that ſeeks their well-being only in the world; and that are ſettling themſelves upon their lees, and they will keep the big world in their arms, till the fire of hell be kindled in their boſom. O remember what a poor portion ye have, who have choſen the world for your portion! ye that will do any thing that ye may get the world bruiked, that agree and capitulate with enemies, and do thereby deny all duty that ever ye have done: Remember, it is the ſhorteſt cut to die well, to live well.

Uſe 3. Is a word of conſolation to his own faithful ones; that however it fare with the world, it ſhall fare well with them. O man! art thou a believer? What is thy caſe? Thou haſt many rich promiſes to apply to thyſelf: And although thy life may be attended with croſſes, yet thou haſt the pro-

miſe of his preſence, and of all the ſtrength that is in Chriſt to be forth coming for thee, and for thy through-bearing; and the end ſhall be well, for the latter end of the righteous is peace, however matters go with the world. And even as to time, it ſhall go well with him; he ſhall have his hundred-fold in this life, and the Lord's preſence ſhall not be wanting, ſometimes leſs and ſometimes more, according as he ſees it needful for him: And if it were no more than the crumbs that fall from the childrens table, it is enough to make thy heart cheerful. His company and preſence make the hardeſt of lots a paradiſe. The pſalmiſt ſaid, *He would not fear, tho' mountains were caſt into the depths of the ſea.* However, his enemies may think light of this, to caſt out a flag of defiance againſt him, and think little of his love that his people partake of; yet he is a friend that loves at all times, and he is ſuch a friend that will ſtick cloſer than a brother. He is not like many temporal friends, that although they have willingneſs to help, yet they want ability; but he is both able and willing. What is it that ye want, but it is to be found in him? Then, will ye affect the cauſe, and endeavour to be in the caſe of his people, and ye ſhall be counted righteous in his ſight: And never reſt, till ye know that their caſe is your caſe; and that ye have a right to him. He gave the prophet a charge to proclaim this in the ears of the people, before he brought on deſolation and wrath upon the wicked, go to the righteous, and ſay to them, that it ſhall be well with them. And now to him that is able to perform this promiſe, and all others, do we deſire to give praiſe. *Amen.*

PREFACE.

1. THERE is this that I would have you conſidering, and they are blind who ſee it not ſo; that the devil hath a great ill-will at this place; for, if he had not a great ill-will he would not have raiſed up his inſtruments, to have deprived us of the former opportunity of the goſpel; nor would he have been ſo buſy to deprive us of the preſent opportunity. But,

2. I would have you conſidering, that God is very angry with the people of this place; for, if the Lord were not very angry, he would not have given Satan, and his inſtruments,

ſo

ſo much liberty to diſturb, and ſtand in the way of the preaching of the goſpel in this place; no: His enemies ſhould not have prevailed ſo much as they have done. We may read much of his anger, not only in the laſt diſappointment, but alſo at preſent, becauſe of the dreadful compliance, far contrary to what would have been expected of them: For, they may all be ſoon numbred, that have ſtood out from their courts in this pariſh of Carmichael. O! that the people of this pariſh and corner, that have heard ſo much of the goſpel, ſhould think ſo little of this heinous ſin, that hath ſuch aggravations in it; and ſo voluntarily to go, and take the mark of the beaſt by that oath of abjuration. Therefore, as God is angry with you in this place, ſo look to feel the weight of his hand, ſo that, eſcape a ſtroke who will, this place ſhall not eſcape. And as for that Lord, that hath been ſo vigilant in preſſing and conſtraining men, over the light of their conſciences, to go and join with theſe courſes of ſinning, adding yet this ſin to all that they have done: Believe it, they that live to ſee it ſhall ſee, *that his houſe ſhall be a deſolation, and his family a curſe.* And I would not give much ſilver for all that his poſterity ſhall bruik of his eſtate; otherwiſe ye may ſay that I had no commiſſion to ſpeak this. And the uſe and improvement that I would have you making of it is this, Study to walk ſo, as ye may be free of the ſad plagues that are coming upon this place. O! flee from the wo and wrath that is coming. But, alas! many are ſo entangled, that they think they cannot get their feet looſe again: But O that ye would conſider the danger and flee ſpeedily unto him; for all that are partakers with them in their ſin ſhall be partakers with them in their plagues. O that ye would therefore take warning, to flee ſpeedily out of wrath's way. We ſhall ſay no more; but let us go to God by prayer, to ſeek his preſence and bleſſing.

SERMON XXXII.

HAGGAI i. 4.

Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houſes, and this houſe lie waſte?

THE world is a great enemy to religion: It is a factor to the devil, to gather in his children. It hath ſtrong claws, and it holds many very faſt; it never lets the grip go, till it caſt them into the bottomleſs pit. Ye may ſee what a great hinderance it is from Matth. xxii. 4, 5. *When the king ſent forth his ſervants, to call in theſe that were bid to the wedding, they made light of it, and ſome went to their farm, and others to their merchandiſe.* And in effect we may ſay this, That there was never a viſible church more worldly than the church of Scotland; and I have thought it ſtrange, that Scotland, that hath ſo little of the world, and is the pooreſt, as to worldly riches, of all nations, yet it is the greedieſt after the world, and the moſt glewed to it of any nation. But I will tell you, they that have ſuch a love to it care little for the houſe of God. And this is the Lord's expoſtulation with the profeſſors of Scotland, *Is it time for you to dwell in your cieled houſes, when my houſe is waſte?*

Now the Jews were returned, and come back from their captivity, and they had begun to build the houſe of the Lord, but they were hindred by their wicked rulers and counſellors; as ye may ſee in the fourth chapter of Ezra; where they ſtirred up Artaxerxes to hinder the building; ſo it was hindred all the days of Artaxerxes, until the ſecond year of Darius: And all the time, that this houſe lay waſte, they were buſy building their own houſes. Then the Lord ſends his prophet to them, and reproves them thus, *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houſes, and my houſe lie waſte?*

I had occaſion to be on theſe words before; and I laid down two doctrines, and proſecuted them, which I ſhall not now name. And a third doctrine was this,

DOCT. 3. *That carnal and lukewarm people, care much more for the things of the world, than they do for the work of God.*

This is clear in the text, and from Phil. ii 21. *For all ſeek their own, and not the things which are Jeſus Chriſt's.* He is ſpeaking here of the generation, that profeſſed godlineſs; and look

look that forecited place, Matth. xxii. 5. They made light of the offer of the goſpel, and went to their farms and merchandiſe, they minded the world ſo much. O! there have been many in Scotland, and many in this bounds, that have made light of the goſpel, and have gone to their trades, and to their labouring; and ſo are held, by the world, from coming to Chriſt; and ſo have ſinned exceedingly againſt God. But what can be the reaſon, that carnal and lukewarm people care ſo little for the houſe of God? we ſhall give you a few reaſons why it is ſo. And,

1. This is a cauſe, The blindneſs of lukewarm profeſſors; for, their blindneſs is ſo great, that they do not ſee Chriſt in his excellency and comelineſs, which if they ſaw, they would be made to cry out, *What have I to do any more with idols?* They would no more make the world their idol; or rather their god: But the want of this is the reaſon that lukewarm profeſſors care ſo little for the houſe of God.

2. The ſecond cauſe, why lukewarm profeſſors care ſo little for the houſe of God is, their not accepting of Chriſt, as king in their hearts: For, where he is accepted as king, he muſt rule and govern: No man can ſerve two maſters: I defy that man that takes not Chriſt as king to rule in his heart, over his will, his mind, and his affections, that ever he will care much for the houſe of God: For, his affections are after, and upon other things.

3. The third cauſe, why carnal and lukewarm profeſſors care ſo little for the houſe of God is, their blindneſs to his cauſe. They ſee not the nobleneſs of Chriſt's cauſe; and therefore it is that they prefer the world before it: They ſee not his declarative glory to be his concernment, cauſe, and quarrel, and ſo they prefer the world before it. But, O! if ye ſaw what a noble cauſe and quarrel, his cauſe is, and what a houſe his houſe is, ye would not be ſo carnal, as to build your own houſes, and to ſeek great things for yourſelves, while the Lord's houſe is lying waſte.

4 The fourth cauſe, why carnal and lukewarm profeſſors, prefer their own things before the cauſe of Chriſt, is, their blindneſs in not ſeeing the vanity and emptineſs of time's things. Though there be nothing more certain than this, that we will carry nothing to the grave; naked came we into the world, and ſo ſhall we return out of it: O! what a naked thing this world is! It may be ſaid of it, as Job ſaid of his friends, Job xvi. 2. *Miſerable comforters are ye all:* And as Solomon ſays, Eccl. i. 2 *Vanity of vanity, all is vanity.* People do not ſee the empitineſs of time's things, and ſo they prefer them before the things of Chriſt. O! if ye could win to ſee, that the Lord can make an ill year part you and the things of the world; and he can make enemies to part you,

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and the things of the world, that ye have ſo high an eſteem of.

5. The fifth cauſe why carnal and lukewarm profeſſors eſteem the world above the things of God, is their brutiſh ignorance; they mind not eternity. The man that cares much for his own houſe, and for the world, he is not careful for eternity: And I would think ſomething to ſee mens hearts glewed to the things of the world, if they were to live everlaſtingly together: But them that hath their happineſs in this life, I may ſay, that they are of all men the moſt miſerable. O! will ye conſider this, when ye prefer the world to the work of God? Remember what the rich glutton ſaid, when he was ſwimming in his earthly pleaſures, and carnal delights: He bade his ſoul take eaſe, for he had enough laid up for many years; but he knew not that the ſentence was paſt in heaven, *This night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee: And then whoſe ſhall all theſe things be, that thou took ſo much pleaſure in?* And then he behoved to leave his full barns, and brave buildings: So, the cauſe of eſteeming ſo much of the world, and ſo little of the work of God, by many carnal and lukewarm profeſſors, is their ignorance and brutiſh fooliſhneſs in reſting ſo much ſatisfied upon the things of this world. O fools! what are they at the beſt, but tranſient and paſſing vanities?

Now there are ſome ſort of folk, that I would reprove from this doctrine. And,

(1) Theſe are to be reproved whoſe thoughts are all concerned, and taken up about their own private things in the world, more than with the work of God. I fear that there are ſome here, that their main care and thoughts, are more how to get their cattle preſerved, and their gear bruiked and keeped in this time, than how to get the houſe of God built again.

(2.) Theſe are to be reproved, that lay aſide their being uſeful for the work of God, when hazard is in the way: And how many are there of this ſort in Scotland, that within theſe eight years, would have been very uſeful, for the work and people of God, that have now laid it aſide, becauſe of hazard that is in the way?

(3.) Theſe are to be reproved from this doctrine, that comply with the enemies of God, that they may enjoy the things of the world; what hath made ſo many comply, and go to the enemies courts, but to get the world keeped? Is not this the reaſon that many lukewarm profeſſors have to give for their compliance? I will not get the houſe keeped, ſay they, if I ſtand out, and go not to courts, *&c.* Oh! alas! it is a poor tale: Therefore we fear that when the Lord returns to Scotland again, he will get few houſe-keepers, or land-keepers to come to.

(4.) The

(4) Theſe are to be reproved, that are more concerned with their own private loſs, than with all the loſſes of the work and people of God. They that have had ſorer hearts for their nolt and ſheep dying, than for the blood of his precious ſervants, that hath been ſhed in ſuch abundance. O atheiſts! remember that ye ſhall come to loſs at laſt, when his people ſhall be made to rejoice.

(5.) Theſe are to be reproved, that rejoice more in a good year, when the world proſpers well with them, than they do, to have the work of God to proſper and thrive. Ay, ſuppoſe that there were a toleration granted for all men to go to their employments, and markets, and tradings again, they would think that they were well come to, if they had eaſe and liberty, though they wanted the precious goſpel. But remember, O carnal atheiſt! that thou art worthy to be reproved; for God ſhall make a ſudden and certain parting betwixt thee and the world, that thou delighteſt ſo much in.

(6.) Theſe are to be reproved, that can go over difficulties to get gain to themſelves; but will not venture to go over difficulties, to do a good turn to the work of God, they venture over all difficulties to build there own houſes; but they venture over none to build the houſe of God. Many will venture far for advantage in the world, that will not in the leaſt venture for the advantage of the church of God. Many will venture to go to markets and fairs over difficulties and hazards, for wordly advantage; but they will not venture to come to a preaching for fear of hazard. Many will venture to carry prohibite ware for their gain; but will not venture to carry prohibite books. But remember, how ſad your doom will be one day, when the Lord bids you go to the gods whom ye have ſerved, and let them deliver you.

DOCT. IV. A fourth doctrine is this; *That God will reduce your practice, in and about your own things, to refute your negligence in the building of his church.* As it is verſe 9. *Ye looked for much and lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it: Why? ſaith the Lord of hoſts: Becauſe of mine houſe that is waſte; and ye run every man unto his own houſe.* Jer. ii. 11. *Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?* And ſo to refute their negligecne, he will bring in the heathen nations in their faithfulneſs to their falſe gods. As ye have it in Malachi iii. 8. *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me.* As if he ſhould ſay, Will the heathen rob or take away any thing from their idol-gods, though yet they be no true gods, no; they will not: Therefore he will bring in their care, diligence, and faithfulneſs, to refute the negligence of his profeſſing people. Enemies are alſo diligent in the courſes that they take in hand; and therefore he will bring in enemies to refute the negligence of his

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own people. Enemies are diligent in counting and ſtretching for their whole power, for promoting a courſe of wickedneſs; ſo the Lord will make uſe of this to refute the negligence of his people. And there are two ſorts that he will thus refute.

1. Thoſe that are diligent about their own things, to refute their negligence for his work: Thoſe that are careful about their own work; and ſpare no time for this. But can get no time to pray to the Lord, for fear it wrong their own work.

2. Thoſe that venture over difficulties for gain and advantage to themſelves, but will not go over difficulties when they are in their duty, as I ſaid before. Therefore, O remember, that the Lord will ſeek no other thing to witneſs againſt you, than your own practice, to refute your negligence, and condemn it. *Is it time for you, O ye to dwell in your cieled houſes, and this houſe lie waſte?*

Doct. V. A fifth doctrine that I ſhall name is this, *That God hath a witneſs in every man's conſcience that will ſpeak for him.* He appeals it to them, *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houſes?* All the appeals in ſcripture prove this, as that in Jer. v. 7. *How ſhall I pardon thee for this?* Putting the queſtion over to themſelves to anſwer; *How ſhall I pardon thee for this?* &c. Ay, God hath a witneſs in every man's boſom, that will witneſs for him; I do not ſay, but in the time of ignorance you may have no ſpeaking witneſs; and when, by conſiderate and accuſtomary ſinning, ye may ſilence the conſcience, ſo that it ceaſe to be a reprover, yet God hath a witneſs, and this witneſs ſhall ſpeak for him one day.

Now, there are three ſorts, that I would apply this doctrine to. And,

1. I would apply it to thoſe, who when they have complied, and gone to their curates and gone to their courts, when queſtioned for it, they ſeek out arguments to defend it, and to cheat their own conſciences; and are not afraid to go to the Lord's holy word, to ſeek to cover their ſin; but I tell you, ye that are guilty, conſider what ye are doing; for God will one day put the queſtion to yourſelves, and your conſcience will ſpeak for him.

2. I would apply this, to theſe who are ready to take advice and counſel from men; that ſay, Such a man, and ſuch a man, he counſelled me; and ſuch a miniſter he hath gone ſuch a way, and can there be any ill in it? Remember, that you are reproved from this, that ye lay more weight upon the counſel and example of men, than upon the witneſs of conſcience.

4. I would apply this to theſe, who, by their cuſtomary ſinning, do much to get the conſcience ſilenced, if they can get

get it done. I remember a ſtory of two murderers, the one had committed a ſingle act of murder, and the other had followed a cuſtom of this practice; he that had committed but one act, could not get his conſcience quieted; but the other adviſed him to go on in that courſe: For at firſt it was ſo with him, which he did, and ſo got peace enough. So people this way get the conſcience ſilenced: And for my part, I think little of it, although people think little of going to kirks, to hear theſe profane curates; and to go to enemies courts; and of paying ceſs and locality to theſe bloody ſoldiers, for maintaining them, to deſtroy the Lord's work and to kill his people; becauſe of their cuſtomary ſinning, their conſcience is much quieted. Many had a reluctancy at the firſt, to go and join in theſe courſes, who now have great peace; and will pretend and argue clearneſs in it, and, by arguments defend, what they do. O bad caſe! they have gotten their conſcience ſeared, as with a hot iron. But, O remember, that this witneſs, that ye have ſilenced this way, will one day flee in your face: This never dying worm of conſcience ſhall be your tormentor.

4. I would apply this to theſe, that go on in ſin, and yet have a witneſs in themſelves againſt it. They go to the kirks and hear the curates, with conviction that it is ſin; Wherefore is it then that ye go! To ſave your gear. Remember the queſtion will be put home to you; anſwer therefore; let conſcience ſpeak, whether that be ſin or duty, to go to the kirk and communicate with theſe men in their rebellion againſt God; and to go to their courts, and pay ceſs and locality for maintaining the Lord's enemies, to ruin his work and people. O let conſcieuce ſpeak! if your courſe be not right, why go ye on in it, and ſlight the voice of conſcience now? But remember, that it will flee in your face one day. The gnawing worm of the conſcience of the damned, that will torment them for ever. O! will ye all remember this, ye that ſlight the voice of conſcience? But I ſhall ſay no more.

PREFACE.

CHRIST JESUS is moſt willing to come amongſt us; but, there are many ſorts of folk here that are great ſtops in his way. As,

1. Theſe who are come here, and yet are holding their idols in their hearts: O! will ye remember that there is no concord betwixt Chriſt and Belial; nor no agreement betwixt the temple of God and idols? One luſt retained in the heart is enough to keep out Chriſt. Some are come with the world in their hearts; ſome with one idol, and ſome with another, which they will not quit with; and for this Chriſt will not come to them, till they be in another caſe, by forſaking all their idols,

2. The ſecond ſort, that are a great hinderance in Chriſt's coming are indifferent folk; ſuch as care not whether he come or not: O! I fear there are many of you that fall under this name, who are come here without any ſerious deſire after Jeſus Chriſt: And when it is told you, that ſuch indifferent folk are not meet for Jeſus Chriſt, ye have but little painedneſs of heart, or concern about the ſame; which is a ſad evidence of your indifferency, and that ye care not whether ye find Chriſt in his ordinances or not.

3. The third ſort that are great hinderers of Chriſt's coming are hypocrites: Theſe are great hinderers of Chriſt's preſence; for, they come to ordinances as Joab went to Abner, with a bloody dagger under his mantle, to kill him: Ye would think it ſtrange language to tell you, that ye are come to betray Chriſt this night, but we tell you hypocrites, ye are come as Judas did to betray Chriſt with a kiſs; hypocrites crucify Chriſt under the vail of love, and carry their arms under their mantle of pretended love, to crucify him as Joab and Judas did: So wherever hypocrites come, they are a plague to the aſſembly of the Lord's people; for others are the worſe dealt with for their ſakes.

4. The fourth ſort, that are great hinderers of Chriſt's coming are unbelievers; for Chriſt cannot do many mighty works among ſuch as live in unbelief, as himſelf teſtifies of the unbelieving Jews, Matth. xiii. 58 O but unbelief be a great mar in Chriſt's way! O but unbelief be a bloody ſin! for it kills many a poor ſoul: For, as hypocrites crucify Chriſt under a vail of love, ſo unbelievers crucify Chriſt under a vail of humility. If any one would ſay to an unbeliever,

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Why do ye not embrace Chriſt, and take him at his word? Say they, Chriſt is ſo great a Prince, and I ſuch a poor loathſome object upon the dunghill, that I dare not believe in him; but oh! this painted humility is, in reality but the height of pride and ignorance: It is like one of whom it is reported, That he would not take up a crown at his foot and wear it: For thus it is with all unbelievers, they are ſo proud, that although Chriſt comes to them, and offers them a crown freely, they will not take it out of his hand; for, though they have a ſhew of painted humility, it is nothing but brutiſh pride. O! are ye ſenſible, ſirs, of this bloody ſin of unbelief that murders ſo many ſouls, that Chriſt cannot take up company with? I tell you, it is no preſumption to believe in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, ſince he hath commanded it: Can it be preſumption to obey the king's lawful command! And *this is his commandment, that ye believe in the name of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 John iii. 23. O but we might expect an heartſome meeting with him, if we were freely quit of unbelievers from amongſt us!

5. The fifth ſort, that are great hinderers of Chriſt's coming, are ſecure folk: A company of ſenſeleſs ſecure ſleepy folk, are great hinderers of Chriſt; for, he meeteth with theſe that rejoice and worketh righteouſneſs; but, we read not in all his word, that he meeteth with ſuch as ſleep in ſecurity. Alas! there is ſuch a ſleeping lethargy ſeized upon this generation, that the very ſounding of a trumpet will not awaken them out of their ſleep. O ſleepy ſecure folk! ye are a great hinderance in Chriſt's way. And, alas! I muſt ſay to that man and that women, that will not awake in ſuch a time as this, Sleep on, for ye know nothing, that know not this, that God never took more pains to awaken any generation than he hath taken to awaken this generation for, he ſent his word among us, and that did it not; and now he hath ſent his rod, but neither hath that done it. He hath cried to us, and that hath not done it: And he hath begun and continued to chaſtiſe us; but that hath not done it. O ſecure folk! Will ye awake leſt ye ſleep unto death. Let us pray that he awaken us.

SERMON XXXIII.

HOSEA xiii. 9.

O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf; but in me is thine help.

MAN hath always leaſt will to walk in the way that God ſets him in: Man would always rather walk in his own way, than in God's way. When God created man, he entred into a covenant of works with him; but though he could, he would not keep it, but break it; and thereby rendered himſelf liable to all miſeries. Again, the Lord out of his free love entered into a covenant of grace with him, through a Mediator; yet notwithſtanding of this, there is in man by reaſon of ſin, a natural enmity againſt God, till the Lord renew the will: and man would rather be ſaved by a way of his own, than by Chriſt's way, till he ſee the neceſſity of believing in Jeſus Chriſt for ſalvation. This is ſummarily comprehended in theſe words: *Thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf; but in me is thine help.*

In the beginning of this chapter it is ſaid, *That when Ephraim ſpake trembling, he exalted himſelf in Iſrael;* That is, when he got out God's laws, then the fear of God was upon him: But, *When he offended in Baal, he died.* From this we may obſerve,

1 "That it is peoples ſin that brings them down from "their excellency." What brought the church of Britain down from her glory? It was even this, her ſinning againſt the Lord.

2. "That when people are once ſet upon a courſe of defec-"tion, it is hard for them to hold from proceeding from evil "to worſe:" For here it is ſaid, ver. 2. *And now they ſin more and more;* for one ſtep of defection makes way for another; and we may ſee this in ourſelves; for one firſt ſtep of defection hath been a chain to draw us into all the reſt. Verſe 3. It is ſaid, *They ſhall be as the early cloud and morning dew, that ſoon paſſeth away:* By which is ſignified, that there is no ſtability in theſe enjoyments, that are procured by ſinful courſes; for they ſoon flee away, as the cloud and dew doth, when the ſun riſeth: For the Lord watcheth over people for evil and not for good, while they continue in ſinful courſes.

But now I come to the words; *O Iſrael! thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf.* This is ſpoken of the ten tribes: And what was it that

that deſtroyed them? It was their ſin in chooſing and ſetting up of Jeroboam to be their king, without aſking the Lord's advice, or waiting for his commandment; and then falling into idolatry, by worſhipping the golden calves which he ſet up at Dan and Bethel; and afterwards their worſhipping of Baal: From one ſtep of ſin they proceed to another, till they have deſtroyed themſelves: And here the prophet gives the cauſe of their deſtruction, that it is of themſelves; *O Iſrael! thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf.* Peoples deſtruction is of themſelves; it is their ſins that deſtroy them. And as their original ſin is the fountain and root of all other ſins, ſo it may juſtly be ſaid, that original ſin is the cauſe of their deſtruction. And now we could aſk this at you, Are ye ſenſible that ſin hath deſtroyed you? O! if ye were ſenſible of this, ye would have another kind of exerciſe upon your ſpirits than you have, concerning the way to be relieved from under the burden of ſelf-deſtroying ſin. Alas! we fear, that few of you are convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin. And therefore in ſpeaking from this at the time, I ſhall,

I. Give you ſome evidences of theſe that are not convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin.

II. I ſhall ſhew you whereby ye may know if ye be convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin.

I. Now, as to the firſt of theſe; as the moſt part of peoples practices declare that they are not convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin, ſo theſe things following are particularly evidences of it.

1. The firſt evidence of a people that are not convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin is this, when a ſight of ſin ſets them not on a way of humiliation; but, over all the diſcoveries they have of ſin continue unhumbled and unbroken in heart for the ſame: And by the deceit of Satan, the enemy of man's ſalvation, conclude, that it is as ill with them as it will be, and that all is but one fault; and therefore they remain unconcerned as they were, notwithſtanding of the ſight they have of ſin. If we could hear the conſcience of this generation ſpeak, we would find this to be true.

2. The ſecond evidence of the want of the conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, is when people go on in ſin, with a reſolution to continue in it. Some do this; they take a liberty to ſin, and becauſe they are not convinced of the deſtroying nature of it, they reſolve to continue in it and ſeek not the remedy provided in Chriſt Jeſus for loſt ſinners, for deliverance from the power and dominion of it. And, O but this is a great ſign of the want of love to God, and the want of love to your own ſouls! for love to God would make you to ſtand in awe to ſin, becauſe it offends God, and love to your own ſouls would make you to hold off from ſin, becauſe

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it deſtroys the ſoul. O conſider this, and forſake ſin ſpeedily! and do not think that it will be ſufficient for you to reſolve to quit ſin afterward; for, what if God call you before his tribunal, before that time come? And then, how will ye anſwer to him for your continuing in and taking a liberty to ſin?

3. The third evidence of the want of the conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, is the following of ſin through example. There are many that follow ſin through example of others, againſt the challenge and conviction of their own conſcience; and that declares, that they have not the thorough ſight, and right conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin. Some of you will ſay, Some miniſters go, and hear the hireling curates preach, and may not we go alſo? And ſo ye follow their example, though ye have a reluctance in your conſcience againſt it. But what pleaſure will ye have in this, when ye are brought to anſwer before God, at his tribunal? It will be but a poor argument; and what will not excuſe you, that ye have followed the example of others.

4. The fourth evidence of the want of the conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, is the following of ſin through advice, even when they have ſome reluctance againſt it. We have heard of ſome that would not have complied with ſinful courſes, if their friends had not adviſed them: Some will ſay they would not have payed fines; but counſel prevailed with them to do it. This is a poor argument that will avail them nothing when they ſtand before their Judge. Now, paying of fines is a great ſin againſt the Lord: For,

(1.) It is a ſeeking of enemies peace and proſperity which is contrary to his word, Deut. xxiii 6. *Thou ſhalt not ſeek their peace, nor their proſperity, all thy days for ever.*

(2.) It is a ſinning againſt the Lord's work; yea, it is a denying of the Lord's work, and a denying of your duty, when ye pay fines for doing your duty, as if it were your ſin.

(3.) It is a ſinning againſt enemies; for it hardens their hearts, and ſtrengthens their hands in their wickedneſs, and makes their ways juſtifiable.

(4) It is a ſinning againſt the tender and godly, who are offended at it, and a ſinning againſt your own ſouls, when you comply with ſuch ſinful courſes, through the ſinful advice of men, and the fear of man, that brings you into this ſnare. O! this proclaims that ye are not thoroughly convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin; for if ye had this, ye would endeavour not to ſin upon any account. O beware of the fear of man! for it brings on much ſin. What is it, that makes you put bribes in the enemies hands, when they come to your houſes, but the fear of man? And by this ye ſtrengthen their hands,

hands, and deny to give a teſtimony for Chriſt, and againſt them.

(5.) Paying of fines is a ſhifting of the croſs of Chriſt. It is true, that none ſhould caſt themſelves needleſly in a ſnare; but it is as true, that none ſhould take a wrong way to ſhift the croſs of Chriſt, for this is not agreeable to his word, as ye may ſee, Matth. xvi. 24. *Then ſaid Jeſus unto his diſciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me.*

5 The fifth evidence of the want of the conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin is this, many think, if they ſin not actually they are not guilty, though they countenance others in ſin. Now, this ſpeaks out the want of a real conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin; for it is againſt the word of God; for he hath ſaid, Lev. xix. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: Thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.* Conſider this, ye that give your goods and houſes to others, that they may comply and keep them, for it is all one as if ye did it yourſelves, for the ſin is yours, and then it becomes the ſin of your neighbours; and as it is their ſin, it is upon your account: But ye will ſay, ye did not bid them comply, but ſince ye knew they would comply, your knowing that they would do it makes it your ſin. O conſider this, ye that are guilty this way, and be not ſatisfied with yourſelves till ye repent, and recover yourſelves from under this ſin! and conſider, that God is a ſin-revenging God; and if ye will not be convinced, and repent in time, he will be avenged upon you to all eternity.

II. The ſecond thing was, to ſhew you how ye may know, if ye be convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin: And the evidences of it are theſe.

1. When people are throughly convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin, they are alſo convinced of their own inſufficiency and inability to help themſelves, from under their ſin and miſery: And therefore papiſts, that place a ſufficiency in their duties, and are ſatisfied therein, are not convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin; for ſuch as have oft a right ſight and ſenſe of the deſtroying nature of ſin, have alſo the conviction of their own inſufficiency and inability to help themſelves from under their miſery.

2. Such as are throughly convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin are convinced of their unwillingneſs, as well as of their inability; ſo they ſee, that they are neither able, nor willing to help themſelves, from under their loſt and undone caſe and condition, and they ſee that there is nothing in them to move Chriſt to be their help. O! if ye would believe this, that it is the free grace of God, in Chriſt Jeſus, that is the only moving cauſe in Chriſt to be your help and Saviour!

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for the want of the belief of this keeps people ſtaggering and doubting, they are ay ſeeking ſomething for their relief in themſelves; but they will never be rightly ſettled, or ſtayed, concerning their caſe, till they ſee that their help is only in him. And a thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin would help you to ſee your unwillingneſs to come to Chriſt, and your unworthineſs of him.

3. Such as have a thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin will have ſuch pregnant motions, and pricking convictions, as will ſink to their heart with grief and ſorrow; and will make the ſoul cry out, with the jailor, Acts xvi. 30. *what muſt I do to be ſaved?* O! if ye knew any thing of this, which is of ſuch ſoul concern, ye would not ſpend your days as ye do.

4. They that are convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin have a permanent, thorough, and abiding conviction of ſin, as David had, when he ſaid, Pſal. li. 3. *My ſin is ever before me.* O! how few can ſay, that they are under ſuch a deep conviction of ſin, that is a permanent and abiding conviction, till the Lord get his end thereby!

5. Where there is a thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, it produces in the ſoul a hatred againſt, and lothing of ſin: They will hate and lothe ſin, as if it were poiſon; and that not only as it is hurtful to themſelves; but as it is hateful to God, ſinful in his ſight, and grieving and offending to him, and not as it was with Judas, whoſe repentance was, becauſe his ſin was hurtful to himſelf, and not as it was hateful to God. For this they will hate and lothe the very nature of ſin, as the worſt of poiſon, whatever it is and in whomſoever it is.

6. The thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin produces in the ſoul a forſaking of ſin, according to that which is required, Iſaiah lv. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Ezek. xviii. 31. *Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, whereby ye have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit; for, why will ye die, O houſe of Iſrael?* Let none think that they are convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin, as long as they continue ſtill in ſin; for, when the Spirit of God convinceth of the deſtroying nature of ſin, it is followed with a forſaking of ſin, otherwiſe it doth not lead on to a ſaving work of converſion.

7. A right diſcovery of the deſtroying nature of ſin lays open and convinces the ſoul of original ſin, as well as of actual tranſgreſſions, and makes the ſoul to ſay with David, Pſal. li. 5. *Behold I was ſhapen in iniquity, and in ſin did my mother conceive me.* Natural convictions will convince the ſoul of

ſuch

ſuch actual ſins as are known to the world; but the Spirit of God, in giving the thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, convinces the ſoul of original ſin, and actual ſin; of ſins known and unknown to the world: Yea, it makes the ſoul to look back and ſee, that the bitter root from which all actual ſin ſprings is original ſin.

8. The thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin makes the ſoul to have a high eſteem of mercy, and of Jeſus Chriſt the purchaſer and giver of mercy; and it cannot otherwiſe be, when, to the ſoul under the deep conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, Chriſt cries, *In me is thy help.* This is ſeaſonable comfort to the ſoul that is crying out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Or, *What would I not do to be ſaved?* O! this makes the ſoul to run to Chriſt, without being hindred by any thing, and to have a high eſteem of him. It is with the convinced ſinner in this caſe, as if a poor creature were in a dungeon, and the dungeon ſhut with gates of braſs and bars of iron, ſo that the poor creature could by no means win out of the dungeon he was lying in, and a great prince ſhould come by, and break the gates of braſs, and cut the bars of iron aſunder, and let the poor creature go free; would not the poor creature have a high eſteem of that prince? For the ſoul is chained up in the dungeon of black nature, from which there is no liberty, till Chriſt come by a day of his power, and ſet the poor impriſoned ſouls at liberty. O then! will not the liberated ſoul have a high eſteem of Chriſt the great Prince, that ſets them at liberty? O ye that never knew what it was, to dwell under the ſenſe of his love and free grace, for ſetting you at liberty, ye know not what it is, to be thoroughly convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin!

9 A thorough diſcovery of the deſtroying nature of ſin makes the ſoul to employ Jeſus Chriſt, not only for juſtification, but alſo for ſanctification, to be freed from the prevailing power, filth, and pollution of ſin, as well as from the curſe of the law, and condemning power of ſin: Hypocrites cannot win to this, for they ſeek heaven by external holineſs, and care not, if they could get it, though they live in all their ſins, that are hid from the world: But, from the thorough conviction of the deſtroying nature of ſin, proceeds a deſire to employ Chriſt for ſanctification; for the moſt part of the Chriſtian's exerciſe will be to deſtroy and mortify the remaining power of ſin, and to get the body of death ſubdued; and where this is, it ſpeaks out, that they are convinced of the deſtroying and hateful nature of ſin.

10. The ſoul that is convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin is brought to a ſilent ſubjection under all rods and chaſtiſements, as it was with the church, Micah vii 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him.* The

conviction of her ſin made her to ſtoop under the Lord's hand willingly. They put ſuch a high eſteem upon ſpiritual mercies and ſpiritual deliverance, that they are well ſatisfied with whatever outward chaſtiſements the Lord is pleaſed to bring upon them; but ye that fret and ſpurn under the Lord's chaſtiſements, it is an evidence that ye are not ſenſible of the deſtroying nature of ſin.

Now, it is the work of the Spirit of God, the believer's comforter, to convince the world of ſin, John xvi. 8. *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin.* And therefore, if any of you know what it is to have theſe evidences I have named to you, it is a ſure evidence that the Spirit of God hath convinced you of the deſtroying nature of ſin, and that ye are now in another condition than once ye were in.

Now, for application; there are two ſorts of folk that I will ſpeak a ſhort word to.

(1.) The firſt ſort are theſe who have never been convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin: O take heed to yourſelves; ſee where ye ſtand, and where ye will land; there is no ſafety without Chriſt; therefore awake out of your ſecurity, and flee to Chriſt ſpeedily, before the flames of hell and the judgment of the everlaſting God awaken you: And what awakning will that be when ye paſs through the dark chambers of hell! It will be out of time then to be convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin, and to ſeek to the remedy provided in Chriſt Jeſus for loſt ſinners. O then! be convinced in time, and flee to the city of refuge, otherwiſe the wrath of God will be on you to all eternity.

(2.) The ſecond ſort are theſe who are throughly convinced of the deſtroying nature of ſin: O labour to keep up your convictions, that thereby ye may be led to Chriſt, and intereſted in him! And labour to keep up a high eſteem of Chriſt, who is your help, and deliverer from under yourſelf-deſtroying condition; and dwell under the impreſſions of his excellency; and be putting up that queſtion, *Who is like unto him?* And giving that anſwer, *he is matchleſs and altogether lovely.* O deal with him, that he may take you to himſelf, and make you ſit down under his ſhadow with great delight, and have his fruit ſweet to your taſte!

PREFACE

PREFACE.

THE Lord hath brought us here this night, but would to himſelf that ye knew what ye are ſeeking, and that ye knew what ye are come for. Would to God, ye were prepared for ſuch a work; and that ye may be the better prepared, I will bring ſome few things to your remembrance. And,

1. The firſt thing that I would call to your remembrance is this, that this corner of the land hath wanted much of God's word, and much of God's rod, that other corners of the land have been tryſted with. Indeed Carrick hath been far behind with ſome other places of the land, both as to the having of his word and rod amongſt them. And I would not have you to think, that this way, wherewith ye have been dealt, is any way for your advantage; no, no; for there is much ſtour and duſt ſticking to you, which God hath ſweeped off other places; ſo other places have been before you, both in ſuffering and teſtifying for Chriſt: And, believe it, ye ſhall either refuſe God altogether, or he will not allow you to be ſo far behind in time-coming, as ye have been hitherto.

2. The ſecond thing that I would call to your remembrance is this, that the Lord, even this night, is witneſſing that he will not altogether neglect and paſs by you: The devil in a great meaſure, hath endeavoured to caſt his cloke over this place, but the Lord is making it appear, that it ſhall not be ſo. And, believe me, ye may expect that the Lord will come amongſt you with a ſharper rod and trial after this, than hitherto he hath done; and ye may take it as a proof of his love and kindneſs, for he will have you to underſtand yourſelves better than ye have done.

3. The third thing that I would bring to your remembrance is this, that now, ſeeing, by his merciful providence, he hath convocated you together, to ſuch an opportunity, then ye ought to come with an appetite of hungering and thirſting after himſelf. O but ye have long wanted ſuch a meal as ye might expect here this night, if ye had but an appetite for it! O ſtrange! that people ſhould be ſo many months; yea, ſo many years, we may ſay without ſuch a meal, and have ſo little appetite for it! O! what ſenſeleſsneſs doth this proclaim! O! is it not ſad, that people ſhould be, as it were, ſtarving for lack of food, and yet not hungering and panting after it! O! believe it, that there was never any that came to Chriſt with an appetite, but they always got a portion ere they went away; for a ſenſible empty people get a well furniſhed preach-

er; but a full people, not ſenſible of their wants, get a ſtraitned bound up preacher. O for a ſenſe of emptineſs here this night, accompanied with a hearty longing after Chriſt!

4. The fourth thing that I would bring to your remembrance is this, that your coming here this night will either help you forward, or put you backward: Believe it, our coming here this night ſhall not be for nothing; for it ſhall either be a help forward, or a help backward. O! what a ſad judgment ſhall it be to theſe, to whom it is a help backward, ſo to call it, when that which God hath appointed as a mean to help forward, is turned to the contrary; for this is the ſaddeſt evidence of a people plagued of God, when that which ſhould be the mean of their cure, is the mean to kill them. O that ye would conſider what ye are doing this night! for much depends on this night's work, and on the guiding of it, for it ſhall either lift you higher, or caſt you down lower. And therefore ſee what ye are doing, and what you have before your eyes in coming here, and prepare your hearts for meeting with the Lord.

5. The fifth thing that I would call to your remembrance is this, that ye ſhould put a high price upon this opportunity of the preached goſpel, that God hath long let you want, that ſo ye may know how to prize it the more, and how to make uſe of it. We uſe to have a common proverb among us, *That we do not know the good of the well, till it run dry.* People know not the goodneſs of mercies till they be deprived of them; and that people may learn to put a value upon them, the Lord ſometimes withdraws mercies from them; ſo, I ſay, ye ought to put a value upon this night's work: If ye knew the worth of it, there would not be ſo much ſtanding upon ſtepping-ſtones as there is by the people of this land: I ſay, O that the worth of ſuch an opportunity were known and believed! for if ye knew more of the worth of it, ye would not ſtand back, upon the account of impediments, as ye do, but ye would ſeek after it; for ye ſhould all ſeek after Jeſus Chriſt, and reconciliation with himſelf; and the way to obtain this is held forth in the goſpel: and, O think ye, if ye were ſeeking after this, that there would be a ſtanding back from going ſuch an errand, as to ſeek himſelf in the goſpel, as he is freely offered to ſinners! O ſhould not the free offers of Chriſt in the goſpel be highly prized? O but Chriſt and his goſpel is little eſteemed by this generation!

6. The ſixth thing that I would bring to your remembrance is this, that albeit ye are to put a due value upon ordinances, yet ye muſt look beyond them to Chriſt himſelf; for it is not ordinances that can ſatisfy you, but Chriſt found in the ordinance; the ordinance is but the ſhell to carry the ſubſtance to your ſouls. And, O! that people, when they are ſeeking after

after the ordinances, would ſeek Chriſt in the ordinances; but, alas! many come to worſhip their idols, by ſetting up that in Chriſt's room, that is not Chriſt. O that there may not be idol-worſhippers here this night! Remember, my friends, what I ſay, that it is Chriſt in the ordinances, that ye muſt ſeek and have, though ye are to prize ordinances, yet ye are not to put them in his room; but, with the Pſalmiſt to ſay, as in Pſalm xlii. 1, 2. *As the hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God. My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God*, &c. He was then in the wilderneſs, and wanted the ſanctuary and temple preſence; he wanted the ordinances, and ſolemn meetings for worſhipping of God, and this was a grief of ſoul to him, and he earneſtly deſired them again, that he might have a meeting with God by theſe means; for his ſoul panted after the living God.

Let us pray to him, that he may give us a ſoul thirſting after himſelf.

SERMON XXXIV.

HOSEA xiii. 9.

O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thyſelf; but in me is thine help.

THERE is no doubt, but Jeſus Chriſt would come among us this night, if there were not many bars in his way: Therefore theſe bars muſt be removed, if ye would have Chriſt among you. And,

1. The firſt bar that muſt be removed, is the bar of profanity. People need not think to get Chriſt, while they are keeping their profanity: For to ſuch as are keeping their profanity, he will ſay, *Let them alone, for they are joined to their idols*, Hoſea iv. 17. Profanity bars out Chriſt, and puts him to open ſhame; and therefore ſuch as live in profanity, need not expect that Chriſt will come to their ſoul.

2. The ſecond bar that muſt be removed is ignorance: Ignorance puts away Chriſt, and keeps him from you. If ye were acquaint with Chriſt, and once knew him, O! what heart-flightering would there be after him! yea, your ſouls would

would run ſwiftly after him, like the chariots of Aminidab. But, alas! you are ſo unacquainted with him, that this may be written upon all your duties, *To the unknown God, whom ye ignorantly worſhip.* But, as the Pſalmiſt ſays, *If ye knew his name, ye would put your truſt in him,* Pſal. ix. 10.

3. The third bar that muſt be removed, is the bar of unwillingneſs: There is ſuch an unwillingneſs amongſt you. That Chriſt ſhould come to you; for ye that have no will to quit with your idols, ye can have no will that Chriſt ſhould come to you: For, as there is no concord betwixt Chriſt and Belial, ſo there can be no concord betwixt him and your idols. Therefore, ye muſt be willing to quit all your idols, or elſe ye cannot be willing to receive Chriſt.

4. The fourth bar that muſt be removed, is the bar of unbelief. Alas! *Chriſt cannot do many mighty works amongſt you, becauſe of your unbelief,* Matth xiii 58. For, unbelief hinders you to ſee a ſight of this king in his beauty, and of the land that lies afar off.

5. The fifth bar that muſt be removed, is the bar of hypocriſy. There are many that, in ſhew and appearance, come to ſeek Chriſt, that in heart are Chriſt betrayers; they ſpeak fair to him with their mouth, yet deliver him to be crucified. Hypocriſy crucifieth Chriſt under a maſk of love.

6. The ſixth bar that muſt be removed, is the bar of worldly-mindedneſs. There is no room in the worldly-minded heart for Chriſt.

Now, if ye would have all theſe bars removed, that ſo Chriſt may come among you, we ſeek no more in order to their removal, but your willingneſs to come to Chriſt, and to have them removed. For, here he tells you, that though ye have deſtroyed yourſelves, your help is in him.

At the laſt occaſion, ſome of you heard me ſpeaking from theſe words, of the deſtroying nature of ſin. But next we came to draw this doctrine from the words.

Doct. *That as people are ſelf-deſtroyed in themſelves, ſo there is in Chriſt help to raiſe them up again.* For he it is that *came from Edom with died garments from Bozarah, glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, that ſpake in righteouſneſs, and is mighty to ſave,* Iſa. lxiii. 1. Yea, as Paul ſays, Heb. vii. 25. *Wherefore, he is able alſo to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come unto God by him, ſeeing he ever liveth to make interceſſion for them.*

There were never any that came to him, that ever found him in the leaſt inſufficient or unable to help them: For, as he ſays, *In me is thine help;* ſo it is ever found to be true. I ſhall therefore declare unto you, what help is to be found in Chriſt. And,

1. There

1. There is great help to be found in Chriſt; all other helps are but little and vain helps; but, as his ſalvation is called the great ſalvation, ſo his help is the great help, that delivers from ſin, and gives the great ſalvation; and as they cannot eſcape wrath, who neglect the great ſalvation, ſo, if ye flee not to Chriſt for help, ye cannot be delivered from the wrath which is to come.

2. There is ſufficient help to be found in Chriſt; He is ſufficiently able to help the moſt needy that come to him, and to heal the moſt deadly diſeaſes of all that come to him. Ye never read of any that came to Chriſt, with any diſeaſe but he healed them: And none can come to him with any diſtemper, or want, but they will find him fully ſufficient to cure their diſtempers, and to ſupply all their wants; for he is a ſkilful phyſician to heal, and a rich Saviour to ſupply all his peoples wants. And they that come to him under the ſenſe and burden of ſin, and difficulties that they are under, he will free them from one part of their burden, and give them a back to bear the reſt: For, he is a ſkilful and all-ſufficient help, who can give the believer grace to overcome ſin, and ſtrength to wreſtle againſt temptations, and to ſet about duty. Then, let no objections whatſoever, no wickedneſs that ye are guilty of, and no difficulties that ſtand in your way, keep you from coming to this ſufficient help, that is in Jeſus Chriſt; for believe it, to you who have deſtroyed yourſelves, he is a ſufficient help.

3. There is an admirable help to be found in Chriſt; there is ſuch admirable help in him to ſelf-deſtroying ſinners, as is the wonder of the higher houſe; it is the wonder of angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, who worſhip before the throne of God; they wonder at this admirable help that is in Jeſus Chriſt, to loſt ſinners: It is ſaid Rev. viii. 1. *There was ſilence in heav'n for half an hour.* They were ſtricken ſilent with amazement, at the wonderful work of man's redemption. O believers ye ſhould be making this your work now, that ſhall be your work above in the heavenly Jeruſalem; to be wondering at this admirable help that is in Jeſus Chriſt to loſt deſtroyed ſinners.

4. There is a dear-bought help to be found in Chriſt: Chriſt payed dear for this help, which he purchaſed to ſelf-deſtroying ſinners; for, to purchaſe it, he did lie three quarters of a year in a virgin's womb; to be born in a low condition to wander up and down, not knowing where to lay his head; to ſuffer the wrath of God; to ſweat drops of blood in the garden; to die the curſed death of the croſs, to be buried and to lie in the grave till the third day. It coſt him all this, to procure this help, and yet he offers all the privileges purchaſed thereby to you on eaſy terms; he requires

no more, but that ye receive it. O! there is much love and much willingneſs in him to give you this help. O therefore. receive and embrace this help, as it is freely offered unto you!

5. There is a free help to be found in Chriſt: O! it is a free help; for he debarreth none from it, but inviteth all to come and receive it, Iſaiah lv. 1. *Ho every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; yea, come buy milk and wine, without money and without price.* O come and receive this help! for if ye come, he will not caſt up your former ſins, but if ye will come to him with your burdens, ye ſhall find help: He is ready to anſwer all your objections; and though ye do not know your own condition, yet here is help for you, if ye will receive it freely, as it is freely offered to you.

6. There is a communicative help to be found in Chriſt: Every one may have as much of it, as no other had it but they: It is like the light of the ſun, every one hath as much of it, as there were none but they enjoying it, ſo every believer hath as much grace here, and ſhall have as much glory hereafter, as there were no other enjoying grace and glory, but they themſelves. O! how deſirable is this communicative help, that each believer ſo abundantly enjoys, and none envies another in? O! it is deſirable to perceive.

7. There is a ſatisfying help to be found in Chriſt, whatever diſcouragements any of you are under, come to Chriſt, and ye ſhall find ſatisfying help to bear you up under all your diſcouragements: Give in your deſires, and make your requeſts known to him; and he will give you a ſatisfying help. Would ye have your ſouls ſanctified from the pollution of ſin? in him is this help; for *his blood cleanſeth from all ſin*, 1 John i. 7. Would ye have your eyes ſatisfied? then come to him who *fills heaven and earth with his preſence; whoſe countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedar;* for there is bulk and beauty enough in him to be a ſatisfying help to you in this. Would ye have your ears ſatisfied? then *incline your ear, and come to Chriſt, hear, and your ſouls ſhall live*, Iſa. lv. 3. come to him, that hath the words of eternal life, and he will be a ſatisfying help to you, by proclaiming in your ears, while lying in your blood, Live. And what more would ye have? Would ye have your taſte ſatisfied? O then? embrace Chriſt, and he will make you eat and drink abundantly till your taſte be ſatisfied; for, ye ſhall *ſit down under his ſhadow with great delight, and have his fruit ſweet to your taſte*, Canticles ii. 3. Would ye have your ſmelling ſatisfied? then come to him, *the ſmell of whoſe ointment is better than ſpices, and the ſmell of his garment, like the ſmell of Lebanon*, Canticles iv. 11. as the ſmell of a pleaſant field. And, would ye have your feeling ſatisfied? There it ſufficient help in him for this! for, he

that

that fills heaven and earth, offers to fill your arms. O then! do not reject this help; but consider that none can give it but Christ.

8. There is a glorious help to be found in Christ: It is a help that tends greatly to his glory, and to bring you to glory in the end, when the glad tidings of help through Christ to poor sinners, came to be preached on earth, how was it preached? It was preached by the heavenly host, by praising of God, and saying, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will towards men*, Luke ii. 13, 14. It is a glorious help: Have any of you a desire to have Christ glorified, then take this help off his hand? He offers it willingly O will ye set the crown upon his head, and glorify him, accepting of his freely offered salvation. *O behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him!* for, what is this, but even the acknowledgment that believers give to him? God will see who will glorify him: When ye can do it, no other way than this way, set the crown on his head, and glorify him, by taking this help off his hand.

9. There is an eternal help to be found in Christ; such an help, as will help you to all eternity: Ye will never need help again; for, this help will help you to the full enjoyment of himself, through all the ages of eternity: And he will put you in such a capacity, as ye will never more fear any evil whatsoever; for, if once you were entred eternity, all the devils in hell cannot molest you; so it shall be an eternal help to you against all evil.

And there are several properties in this help, that should engage you to embrace it. As,

1. Christ's condescendency to take on him man's nature, and to pay the price of his own blood. O consider what he hath endured, before he could procure this help to you! O let this allure you to embrace this help!

2. It was out of free love to you, that made Christ purchase and procure this help to you. O! what cold-hearted creatures are ye, that have no love to kind hearted Christ, who hath done so much for lost fallen man? He is seeking this as a proof of your love, that ye accept and receive him; that ye may take him, and all the benefits of his purchase. And, O! that his infinite love may beget this love to you, that a knot may be cast to unite you to him, never to be loosed!

3. Christ is very serious to have you engaged to take this help that is in him: He is come, not with empty words, but with fair engaging compliments, to engage your hearts to embrace him. O! will ye let such a prince, as he is, humble himself so far, as to come to you, as it were upon his knees, beseeching you to take his help, and will ye reject and refuse him! If your hearts were as serious this night to receive

Chriſt, as he in offering himſelf, ye would have no more to do, but lie down with him in the bed of love.

5. Without this help, the wrath of God is abiding, and will abide upon you to all eternity; Ye are undone for ever, and devils and hypocrites will be your companions to all eternity, unleſs ye embrace this help that Chriſt offers you: O therefore embrace it! let your neceſſity move you to it: If ye were ſenſible of your neceſſity, ye would deal earneſtly with Chriſt for this help. O! as he is ſerious, ſo be ye importunate with him; for, neceſſity hath no law; it will anſwer all objections: Neceſſity, over all objections, will ſay, I muſt have him. And now while he is offering you his help, let your neceſſity move you to embrace and receive it this night: Young and old, and all of you receive this help. But I am afraid, that for as great as your need is of this help, there are five ſorts of perſons that will not embrace it. And,

(1.) The firſt ſort, that will not receive Chriſt's help, are ſelf-righteous perſons: That is, ye who build your confidence in convictions of ſin, attainments, good wiſhes, and good actions; all ye that do ſo, are among theſe who refuſe this help that is in Chriſt: Therefore take heed to what ye are doing; he is deſiring you to leave off your fooliſh building, and to renounce all your own righteouſneſs as filthy rags, and to put all your confidence in this glorious help, that is to be found in Chriſt.

(2.) The ſecond ſort that will not receive Chriſt's help, are theſe who are of Demas's temper; that embrace this preſent world, and let Chriſt go: There is ſo much of the world ſeated in your hearts, that ye have not a heart to receive Chriſt? What ſhall I liken this world to? It is like a weighty burden upon peoples backs, that hinders them to go to the heavenly Jeruſalem. O! will ye lay aſide this weight, and embrace this help that is in Chriſt.

3. The third ſort that will not receive Chriſt's help, are theſe, who, with Felix, put off Chriſt till a more convenient ſeaſon; and that ſeaſon never comes. O do not put him away this night; for ye do not know but ye may be ſummoned before his tribunal, before ye get another occaſion: Ye know not but the dreadful ſentence of condemnation may be paſt againſt you, that reject his help this night, before the convenient ſeaſon that ye put off to be come; and then when ye call, he will not hear.

(4.) The fourth ſort that will not receive Chriſt's help are theſe who would rule the word of God by their practice; but will not have their practice ruled by the word of God. Ye ſhould wholly travel betwixt Chriſt and the law, the law condemns the ſinner and ſends him to Chriſt for juſtification, and Chriſt ſends the ſinner back to the law, for direction, how to frame

frame their converſation: But they who will not rule their way by the word of God, would have the word of God, to be ruled by their way: People who will not be ruled by the word of God, will ſay, Why may I not comply with the hireling curates? And they will wreſt the ſcripture; by ſaying, The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes's ſeat; therefore they ſhould be heard, ſince they are called unto office; but this is falſe when applied to the curates, for they are not called to the office; for they enter not in by the door, but climb up another way. They enter by perjury, in a forbidden way: Therefore, they are intruding hirelings, thieves, and robbers. And Chriſt never taught his diſciples and followers to hear thieves, and robbers, or intruding hirelings; but on the contrary, he ſays, *That his ſheep would not follow a ſtranger; but would flee from him; becauſe they know not the voice of ſtrangers*, John x. 5. Again, people who are reſolved to pay fines, whereby they make themſelves tranſgreſſors, and give for their warrant, that which David ſays, *They made me reſtore that which I took not away*. Conſider that which David ſays, *Bands of the wicked have robbed me*. David did this paſſively, and not actively; as if it were ſaid, they fined David, and he would not pay the fine: And they ſent out robbers on him, that robbed him; and therefore in this he was a ſufferer. And doth not Paul ſay, *If I build again that which I have deſtroyed, I make myſelf a tranſgreſſor?* By your paying of fines ye acknowledge yourſelves to be tranſgreſſors. The point is, the perſons that would rule the word by their way, and will not rule their way by the word, cannot come to Chriſt; for the law ſends the ſinners to Chriſt for juſtification, and Chriſt ſends the ſinner back to the law for direction. But they that hear and follow the advice of their relations, in this evil time, reject the advice of Chriſt, and will not hearken to his voice. Chriſt invites and calls you all to follow him, and not to hear the voice of ſtrangers: And it will be but a poor excuſe, that many will have when challenged by Chriſt, that they heard the perjured curates, becauſe they were adviſed to do ſo by their parents, huſbands, wives, or maſters. Remember what Chriſt ſays, *Whoſoever loveth father or mother*, &c. *better than me, is not worthy of me*. Do not miſtake me; as if I were not for keeping the fifth commandment; for I am for keeping this commandment as much as any: But when commands or advices are contrary to the word of God, they ſhould not be obeyed or followed: For, our obedience to the command, is only in things that are lawful; for all obedience ſhould be in the Lord, only in things that are agreeable to his will, but no otherwiſe.

PREFACE.

OBUT the Pſalmiſt, in this pſalm, caſts us a noble copy to follow his example; he travels through ſeveral of the works of the Lord, and he makes a noble uſe thereof. After he hath taken a view of ſome of his works, he brings this in as the uſe he makes of them all, to rejoice in his mercy; to make it the matter of his ſong and meditation. And indeed it is a bleſſed travelling through his works, when a ſoul is brought to this, to get God thereby held out to them; and to get themſelves committed to him, by getting him commended to their ſouls: And there are ſeveral of his works, that we ſhould never look upon; but we ſhould be brought thereby, to reflect upon them with ſome ſpecial and ſpiritual uſe; yea, and all his works ſhould be looked upon with ſome ſpiritual obſervation. And,

1. In his works of creation: When we look upon the excellent fabric of the world, and how rich and full it is of his works, ſhould we not thereby be brought to read his power and ſovereignty, and the excellency of his wiſdom, and the wonderful contrivance of his works of creation? Doth not each creature in the ſea, and in the earth carry a character and ſtamp of God? And ſhould not we be brought to make ſome ſpecial and ſpiritual uſe and obſervation of this?

2. When we call to mind theſe glorious works of his, in his providence, in his governing and ruling over the works of his hands, in the works of his providence; O then ſhould not we reflect upon theſe with joy and admiration? When we think upon the greatneſs and glorioufneſs of his attributes, that ſhine forth therein, in the governing ſo wiſely over all his works; ſhould we not be brought to admire the deepneſs of his condeſcendency, in his love to poor man? This is a great piece of the work of them that are above, they need not prayers there or preaching; but their thoughts and exerciſe run all out in love, joy, admiration, and praiſe. So we ſay, the works of his providence, in his ruling and governing all his creatures, ſhould cauſe us to make ſome ſpecial uſe of the ſame. He upholds and defends by his power, and wiſely governs by his wiſdom and faithfulneſs, all that he hath decreed to bring to paſs! and whatever confuſion be in the creatures, all is ordered aright by him: And from this I would ſay, What uſe make ye of them all? And what good get ye of all God's works, that the earth is ſo rich and full of? Indeed it is to be feared that many of us that are here, have ſo little of this ſpiritual ſight, to take up God rightly in all his works, that

that we are as unſenſible as brute beaſts, as to the diſcovering and taking up of God ſpiritually in his works. But we would add this word, that the Lord hath been at more pains with us, to get us taught, than any nation beſide: His providences and mercies have been doubled and tripled to Scotland, and, to ſpeak ſo, with reverence to his name, he hath been dealing with both hands: His mercies have been great to us, and ſure there are none that can ſpeak of more judgments than we may do: And I would have you to learn this, that God, by this hitherto, hath been training us up for what is coming. He hath dealt very gently with us in time paſt, fitting and training us for what he hath to bring us through. This year he hath dealt more ſharply with us than formerly: But let me tell you, that he is, by theſe things that we are daily meeting with, but preparing us for the judgments, that he is bringing on the land: And let me tell you this, that the land is now in a ſwelling motion; they, who live to ſee it, will ſee ſtrange ſights ere all be done. Our caſe, at this time, is like the work of creation at firſt; for then *the earth was without form, and darkneſs covered the face of the earth*, and the fire and water all fighting through other, and ſo it is now. The Lord in former times, divided all rightly, and put the fire above the water, as the philoſophers ſay, and as his word ſays, *and the waters were above the earth.* O! let us pray, that the Lord would put that undermoſt, that ſhould be ſo, and that upmoſt that ſhould be ſo; ſeeing they are of contrary natures, that are now fighting againſt each other; as the fire and water are, and ere theſe two be parted, there will be ſtrange things brought forth. And by this that we have ſaid, we would have you warned, that all that we have met with is but to train and prepare us for what is now coming.

The laſt time that I was in this place I told you ſomething of this, that now is approaching faſt on; it is nearer, and they are blind that ſee it not. O! let us pray to the Lord, that he may turn the wheel the right way! I ſhall ſay no more for prefacing; but let us pray to the Lord, that we may be prepared to meet the Lord, when he comes to conſtruct his glorious fabric out of theſe congruous natures.

SERMON

SERMON XXXV.

REVELATION iii. 4.

Thou haſt a few names even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they ſhall walk with me in white: For they are worthy.

I Had occaſion elſewhere to ſpeak from theſe words; and to raiſe obſervations from them: Ye may read the advice given, ver. 2. *Be watchful, and ſtrengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:* And then the cauſe of it, *for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Thou haſt a few names even in Sardis*, &c. Though this church was in a declining and decaying condition, yet there was a few Chriſtians in her, that had not defiled their garments with the pollutions of the times: There were a few in her that held by the word of God, and the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt. And then what ſhall they have for their ſtedfaſtneſs and fidelity? *They ſhall walk with me in white*, &c. And then all their ſighing and ſobbing ſhall be forgotten: *For they are worthy.* The papiſts ſay, that this worthineſs was their own inherent righteouſneſs and holineſs, therefore they are worthy: But we ſay that it was becauſe they were made worthy by Chriſt's worthineſs: And becauſe they were made to meet with, and come through great tribulations; and had acted faith upon a crucified Lord and Saviour. And ſo they were made worthy. Then,

I. We have here a deſcription of a remnant.

II. We have a deſcription of that remnant.

III. The condemnation put upon that remnant.

IV. The reward of free grace and mercy.

I. The remnant; they are perſons that are pointed out by their names; ſome few in that church of Sardis, that had not defiled their garments; that is, they have been walking with me, cleaving to me and my truth. From the conſideration of this, I ſhall give you theſe obſervations.

1. "That where-ever the Lord ſends the goſpel, he hath "ſome elect ones there:" For, where the goſpel is, there is the doctrine of reconciliation, 2 Cor. v. 19. *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the world to himſelf.* Shall we think that he will ſend the goſpel to a place where he hath none to gather in? It is not ſo with the men of the world; they uſe not to light a candle but where they have ſomething to ſeek.

2. "God's

2. "God's remnant is a very ſmall remnant" Ordinarily when a church or people is in a declining condition and ſtate, it is not the bulk of the land that cleaves to God, and to his truth; it is but a very ſmall remnant: And ſo may we ſay of our land, it is declined; the bulk and body of our land is declined and fallen from God, and from the truth: This land ſeems to be under a ſpiritual deadneſs. It may be ſaid of Scotland, as it was ſaid of this church of Sardis, Rev. iii. 1. *Thou haſt a name that thou liveſt and art dead.* And alſo, we may ſay of Scotland, as was ſaid of this church of Sardis, *Thou haſt a few names in thee, O Scotland, which have not defiled their garments.* We ſay, the remnant that God is well pleaſed with is but a very ſmall remnant, a ſmall company; but yet we hope, there are ſome.

3. "That in a declining time, though never ſo ſad, God can "preſerve a ſeed to himſelf."

4. "That the moſt hopeful ingredient in the cup of a de- "clining church is to have a remnant that keeps clean hands, "clean garments, and ſtraight with God. And we have reaſon to praiſe the Lord, that is mighty in power, that hath to this day preſerved a remnant, when the bulk and body of this land is run away from Chriſt and his truths, to keep their goods and gear. *Thou haſt a few names, even in Sardis, that have not defiled their garments.* So we hope we may ſay, *Thou haſt a few names in thee, O Scotland, that have not defiled their garments.* And this we take to be a token for good, that there is a remnant in Scotland.

Object. But ye will ſay, "What are the properties or marks "of that remnant?" *Anſw.* Here I ſhall point out ſome marks of this remnant.

1. The firſt mark of this remnant that I give you is this, they are fearers of God, more than fearers of men, Mal. iii. 16, 17. *Then they that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another, and the Lord hearkned and heard: and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name: And they ſhall be mine ſaith the Lord of hoſts, in that day when I make up my jewels.* They that lived in that time, (for it was an evil time, as this is now) the more that others fled from God and his truths the more cloſely they clave to him and it; and that was a token for good to them. And then, What ſhall they have for this their cleaving to God then? *In that day when I make up my jewels, they ſhall be mine.* We fear few of you have ground to lay hold upon this mark, or to take any comfort from it; for the greateſt part of you have feared man more than God, and that hath cauſed you to go ſo many black ways, as ye have: That hath been the cauſe of your complying with the enemies of his glory, and of his truth; and the cauſe of your taking

all

all theſe unlawful bonds and oaths; ſo that ye have cauſe to fear that ye ſhall not be his, in that day when he maketh up his jewels. But as for you that have been labouring to cleave to the Lord, and his truths, and have given proof of your fearing God more than men; hold on your way, and ye need not fear, but ye ſhall be gathered up among the jewels.

2. The ſecond mark of that remnant is, they are mourners and wreſtlers, Ezek. ix. 4. There was a company that the angel got a commiſſion to mark, and theſe were they, that ſighed and cried for all the abominations that were done in the midſt of the land; and the deſtroying angel got a commiſſion not to come near any that were marked for mourners. The command was, to hurt none of ſuch as did ſigh and mourn for all the abominations that were committed in the land, ver. 6. They did not only forbear to countenance ſinful courſes; but they mourned over them, and alſo wreſtled with the Lord, that he would preſerve a remnant, that they might not all go a black road together. If ye have any reſpect to God or his truths, ye cannot but be concerned in this evil and declining day, and that God is well pleaſed with none but with mourners and with wreſtlers? What advantage hath the kirk of many of you? It may be regreted that many of you are nothing but a burden to the kirk: Many of you ſadden and weight the hearts of the godly, with your light, looſe and gaudy life, and carriage and apparel. It is certain, offences will come; but, *Wo to them by whom the offence cometh.* There are ſome both men and women, that are a great grief and burden to the reſt; but dear ſhall they pay for it, either here or hereafter; and it may be to all eternity. Labour, as ye love your own ſouls, to mend this, and let not the way of God be evil ſpoken of, becauſe of any thing in you.

3. The third mark of this remnant is, they are endeavouring to be more ſpiritual by the croſs. The apoſtle Paul hath a good word for this, 2 Cor. iv. 16. *Though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man are renewed day by day,* Oh! for the deadneſs and dulneſs that is among the profeſſors of this age, notwithſtanding all the pains that have been taken on us, to make us lowly, and to make us fruitful, what by the word, and what by the rod. We fear many profeſſors be cheating themſelves and others; ye may get yourſelves beguiled, or ye may get others beguiled, but ye will not get God beguiled or cheated: Ye may cheat others, and yourſelves, but God ſees your inſide as well as your outſide: Ye may hide your hypocriſy from one another, but ye cannot hide it from him that ſearcheth the heart and tryeth the reins. If ye be in any meaſure right with him, ye muſt obſerve the rod, and the hand that ſends it. We hold out to you from the Lord, and preach

preach unto you in his name, that ye ſhould rather ſuffer than ſin.

Object. But ſome may ſay, "If it were a great ſin, we would "rather ſuffer than ſin, but we cannot ſuffer for ſo ſmall a "thing, or ſo ſmall a ſin."

Anſw. But will ye conſider rightly upon it: Is any ſin ſmall in the Lord's account? Doth not his word tell you, *That every ſin is a tranſgreſſion of the law;* and deſerves God's wrath and curſe? If any of you were challenged for being here, by the enemy, we fear that many of you would ſwear that ye never ſaw this meeting; or then, if ye would confeſs it, ye would ſwear that ye have no affection or liking to this work: But remember, that he knows your hearts.

4. The fourth mark of this little remnant is, they are meek and lowly; they are a humble people: But yet although they be ſo in their own things, they are zealous in God's matters: They are labouring to be valiant for the truth upon the earth. Search and try yourſelves by this mark, whether ye have been among the remnant, that have been cleaving cloſe to Chriſt, and to his controverted truths, or not.

Now, it may be, ſome of you will be curious to know our teſtimony, and to know what we profeſs and maintain? To this we anſwer you, or any that aſks us ſuch a queſtion, We are the covenanted party, in oppoſition to popery, prelacy, malignancy, eraſtianiſm, ſupremacy and ſectarianiſm. We are for the covenanted work of reformation, agreable to the word of God, contained in our confeſſion of faith, larger and ſhorter catechiſms, cauſes of God's wrath, acknowledgement of ſins, and engagement to duties. And, now the miniſters who have embraced this toleration, they are content to quit the covenants, and will not have children baptized that way, according to our ſworn reformation: But they take another way to get peace: The woful curates have laid them by, and ſo do they: They get peace by their quitting ſome things, which they were ſworn to defend, with their lives, liberties, and eſtates; to ſtand againſt popery, prelacy, and eraſtianiſm, and all the traſh of the whore of Babel. Now, by yielding and conſenting that theſe be embraced, they have got their liberty and poiſonable peace; but we have no peace, becauſe we may not give our conſent to that woful toleration. But if it had been true, that they ſaid of us, we had not been worthy to live in a common-wealth: But be what we will, be we weak, or be we ſtrong; be we few, or be we many; be we fooliſh or be we wiſe; we are ſure of this, that we have the work of God in our hands: Let them ſay what they will, it is our duty to wait upon our God, and to give glory to him. And let us wait on him in the way of our duty. And now I counſel you to theſe duties following:

1. Break off your evil ways and courſe by well-doing. We fear that the day be coming, when many ſhall have the yoke of judgment wreathed about their necks, becauſe they refuſed the yoke of ſuffering. We tell you, whoſoever ye be that refuſe the yoke of ſuffering, ye ſhall get the yoke of judgments wreathed about your necks: Counſel you who will to crooked ways and crooked paths, and hearken to them who will, they cannot, and will not, ſtand betwixt you, and the wrath of an angry God: So hearken not to them that counſel you to walk in ſinful ways, as ye would not incur God's wrath.

2. Labour to be amongſt that remnant, and to be one of that number, that are ſtudying to keep their garments clean from the ſins of the time: And alſo ye muſt labour for theſe marks that we have given you; what ſay ye to it? Will ye take ſhare with the ſuffering ſaints of God, or will ye refuſe? Will ye take ſhare of their lot and their company? What if the Lord take you at your word, if ye do not aſſociate yourſelves with them here, ye ſhall be ſeparated from them to all eternity, if henceforth ye go on in that condition; and we ſhall witneſs againſt you, that we have told you the truths of God, and ye have ſlighted and undervalued them.

3. Honour God and believe in him, labour for ſuch a converſation as will honour him, Pſalm l. 23. *And to him that ordereth his converſation aright, will I ſhew the ſalvation of God.* Put away your lightneſs and gaudineſs; at no time have ye a liberty for this, and much leſs now, when the work of God is run down, and Zion is in trouble. Now, wait on and believe in him; believe in his name, and labour to be among the juſt ones that he hath ſaid *ſhall live by faith*, Hab. ii. 4.

5. Labour to *follow the cloud of witneſſes*, Heb xii. 1. Oh! that ye would ſay ſo, and do ſo. *Be ye not ſlothful, be ye followers of them, that by faith and patience inherit the promiſes*, Heb. vi. 12. That is, either theſe, that art patiently waiting upon the accompliſhment of the promiſes, or theſe that are win to the enjoyment of the promiſes Now, if ye would ſhare with the ſaints hereafter, ye muſt alſo ſhare with them here in time: for our Lord will have no idlers in his houſe: *He that is not with us, is againſt us.* Ye, that will not be concerned with his work, are but a trouble and a hurt to it. Here, ye ſee, are none that get any condemnation, but theſe who had *not defiled their garments.* And to them that keep his word and deny not his name, he ſaith, Rev. iii. 10. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.* Thou that keepeſt by me and by my truths, I will ſtrengthen thee in the hour of temptation and trial.

And now for your encouragement, if ye will fall in love with precious Chriſt, and follow him through troubles and trials, I ſhall name theſe few things that he will do for you.

1. He will bear you company; he will bear your charges, Iſa. xliii. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the water, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they ſhall not overflow thee: When thou walkeſt through the fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt; neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee.* By theſe are meant great and ſtrong temptations and trials; and it is not a great encouragement, and a ſweet ingredient in thy cup, that there is not a caſe thou canſt come into, but he hath help for thee? And if thou wilt not fall in love with him, nor obey his laws and commandments, then he will exerciſe his power and wrath againſt thee, and nothing ſhall proſper that thou takeſt in hand, or goeſt about.

2. If ye fall in love with Jeſus Chriſt, his way and his followers, then he will ſympathize with you, in all your troubles and afflictions: Ye have a clear proof for this, Zech. ii. 8. *For he that toucheth you toucheth the aple of his eye.* There is a kindly ſympathy with his poor people, in their difficulties and ſtraits: *We have not an high-prieſt that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin,* as the apoſtle ſaith, Heb. iv. 15.

3. If ye fall in love with God, he will certainly own your quarrel; he will not ſuffer the enemies always to inſult over his poor church and people: For he will certainly avenge his own elect, that *cry day and night unto him,* Luke xviii. 7. I ſay then, O give not over, but cry day and night to him, and he will without queſtion in his own time and way, give you an anſwer of peace.

4. If ye will make choice of the Lord Jehovah for your portion and reſolve, through his grace, to follow him through well and wo, through good report and ill report, then all that he brings in your way *ſhall work for good,* Rom. viii. 28. And all the paths of the Lord ſhall be mercy and truth to you, if ye will keep his covenant and his teſtimonies, Pſalm xxv. 10.

5. If ye will labour to be among this remnant, that are labouring to keep their garments clean, then all the wicked deſigns of the enemies of his glory he will counteract Remember what he did to Haman, and many other examples ye have recorded in the word of God: And he is the ſame God now that he was then, and he hath the ſame zeal to his own glory, name and truth, and the ſame love to his people, that ever he had.

Now remember, that all the pleaſure of ſin will have an end, and that a ſpeedy end; and ye that take moſt pleaſure

in it will find the wages of it to be bitter, ye will find devouring fire and everlaſting burning hard to endure: And therefore if ye would flee from the wages of ſin, ye muſt flee from ſin itſelf. Be not deceived by the temptation of the tempter, let him not deceive you, as he did our firſt parents at the beginning. Says the tempter, *Ye ſhall not ſurely die*, though ye ſhould ſin in eating the forbidden fruit; yet many millions of their ſeed have found, from woful experience, that he lied to them; as ſo will ye do, if ye continue in ſin, and do not repent and turn from your ſin, and return again to the Lord your God, from whom ye have foully fallen.

6. If ye will take part with this remnant, then the day is coming when all your croſſes and loſſes ſhall be made up to you, though they be ſharp and many, the hundred fold, and life everlaſting will make all up again; and will make you to forget all your toil, and all your ſorrow; yea, it ſhall flee away, and no more return again. You may mind the parable of Dives and Lazarus: Lazarus was in a ſad condition in the world; ye may read how full of boils and ſores he was, and how that the dogs came out and licked his ſores: But then when he died, he went to Abraham's boſom, and then he forgot all his troubles. Then there is not much matter, when and where trouble be, ſince the troubles of the people of God always end in peace and felicity. And likewiſe Dives, he forgot all his pleaſures and lordly fare, and delicate diſhes he had in the world, when he was tormented in hell-flames; and for all the cups of liquor he had in the world, he could not get a drop of cold water to cool the tip of his tongue; therefore beware of ſinning, and labour to join yourſelves to that remnant, that own the Lord's cauſe. What would have become of us, if we had all gone one way! O pray that he would keep a remnant with clean garments, and undefiled! and pray that ye may be among that remnant.

Obſerve here another note from the words, which is this, "Though this remnant were never ſo few, yet the Lord will "not be wanting to commend them; and alſo to defend them "from the wrath of men." For as he tells you, Matth. x. 22. *And ye ſhall be hated of all men for my name's ſake.* So, there is no doubt, but the few, that had not defiled their garments in the church of Sardis, were mocked and reproached by them that had defiled their garments: They mocked them, and held out their fingers to them, even as we are dealt with this day: But though there were but one in a congregation, he will eye that one for good; and condemn them who will, he will commend them. We ſee, he counts them not according to their profeſſion, but according to their faithfulneſs. Whether are they ſuch as let the teſtimony fall, or are they ſuch as hold it up? It is true, the faults of the godly are not

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to be overlooked, but are to be Chriſtianly reproved. When God takes account he will aſk what ſort of Chriſtians ye have been, whether ye have been Chriſtians in the letter only, or Chriſtians in the ſpirit. A Chriſtian in the letter only, hath no will to obey all God's commandments, more than that young man in the goſpel had: He would not obey that command of our Lord's, *Go ſell all that thou haſt, and give it to the poor.* But a Chriſtian in the Spirit, is one inwardly; it is his great ſtudy to get his practice conform to his profeſſion. Now, if ye were never ſo poor and low in the world, yet if your courſe and walk be right with God, then ye will be approved of, and commended by him. If ye have been honeſt and ſincere in his matters, he will take notice of you for good; but though your profeſſion were never ſo broad, if ye want the truth in the inward man, all will be to no purpoſe. We confeſs we ſhould cheriſh religion wherever we ſee it, or find it, though it have never ſo weak or ſmall beginnings; yet if ye think there be any reality in it, encourage and cheriſh it the more.

Now, they that would be among that remnant, they muſt be ſincere and upright, and endeavour to keep themſelves undefiled: See for this, Pſalm cxix. 1. *Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord.* And he gave Abraham this command, Gen. xvii. 1. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* And ye know Enoch, he got this commendation, that he walked with God, Gen. v. 24. There are few now, we ſuppoſe, but they have been blackned with the abominations of the times; but we adviſe you to come off again, and acknowledge your offences, and turn from the evil of your ways, and amend your ways and your doings; for, it is better late thrive than never thrive.

Another note from the words, *And they ſhall walk with me in white.* Here obſerve, "That although the church may "be very low, yet ſhe ſhall ariſe again." Micah vii. 8. *Rejoice not againſt me, O mine enemy: When I fall, I ſhall ariſe; when I ſit in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me.*

Obſerve, again, "That although the Lord ſpeaks very "ſeverely to thoſe that had declined, yet he ſpeaks moſt tenderly and graciouſly to thoſe few that had not defiled their "garments."

Then if we reckon men according to their generation-work, there is none that God is well-pleaſed with; but thoſe that are ſincerely endeavouring to walk ſtraight before God; ſuch as are ſtudying to walk with clean garments, and it is theſe that the Lord is well-pleaſed with. The children of God have their worſt things firſt, but it is not ſo with the wicked, for they have their beſt things firſt, but that makes them defile their garments: But, he ſays to his own, If ye

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got that which they call beſt, it would make you defile your garments. They have not defiled their garments; that is, they were ſincere as to their generation-work. We muſt not half the work of God; ye muſt not half your religion; ye muſt either be wholly and thoroughly religious, or elſe the Lord will not care for you, nor for your religion neither.

Since the year 1666, the work of God is carried on to poſterity, by honeſt teſtimonies. How is it that the ſaints overcome? It is by the blood of the Lamb, and by their own honeſt teſtimony. The worthies of old, they loved not their lives unto the death. They had a greater reſpect to the glory of God, and to his truth, than they had to their own lives and liberties, Heb. xi. Rev. xii. 11. Here is the patience of the ſaints: They that will be faithful muſt reſolve to give teſtimony to the truth, and muſt cleave cloſe to the truth, though it ſhould coſt them their lives. The church hath had this to ſay, in ages paſt, *The more ſhe ſuffered, the more ſhe overcame.* Every piece of a teſtimony, is a piece of a victory.

Now, for *Uſe*, Beware of taking up an ill report againſt the Lord's faithful witneſſes, or entertaining it; for, many foul mouths have been opened againſt them theſe years paſt; but he hath recorded all. He that heard the reproaches of Ahab againſt his people, he hath heard all the reproaches and nick-names that enemies have caſt upon them: Remember that, in Zech. ii. 8. *He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* He is as tender of his people, as a man is of his eye. Though his wicked enemies be cruel againſt them, yet they have a merciful God, that will be for them: When the wicked ſhall have the face of God ſet againſt them, Pſalm xxxiv. 16.

Now I ſhall give you ſome advices farther, how to carry in theſe evil times. And,

1. You muſt ſtudy the ſubſtance of religion, more than the profeſſion of it. Labour to be godly indeed; if ye knew it, ye would prize it at a more high rate. Do not ſtay long in the place of breaking forth of children; that is, do not ſtay too long in the out borders of a profeſſion, for that is a dangerous condition; even as it is with young children in the birth, to ſtay long in the birth, between the womb and the world: But be always labouring to make ſome progreſs in the work of your ſalvation: *The ground that being often watered, and bringeth not forth fruit, is near unto curſing, whoſe end is to be burned*, Heb. vi. 7, 8. Remember, that ye muſt count for every mean, and for every mercy that ye receive.

2. Prepare to meet with the Lord in the laſt general judgment; and alſo prepare to meet with temporal judgments, that

that he is about to bring upon the lands; he hath been threatning us long with his rod, and we would not take warning; and now, we fear, that ſentence be gone out from the Lord againſt many of this generation, ſleep on; comply on; ſin on. Remember that word, Gen. vi. 3. *My Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man.* But ye that are of the remnant, prepare to meet the Lord; and think not that he will forget all the oppreſſion, violence, ſpoil, and blood-ſhed, that hath been acted ſo cruelly and maliciouſly againſt him and his followers in this land: We tell you from the Lord, it will not be long till the table will be drawn, and the door of mercy will be ſhut, and then ye that ſhall be found out of him, ſhall get the ſentence paſt againſt you, *Depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting burning, I know you not:* And then that ſentence ſhall never be recalled again any more. O! fear wrath, and flee from wrath; and haſte to the city of refuge; haſte you into Chriſt the city of refuge, before the gate be ſhut: Remember what he ſaid to Jeruſalem, Luke xix. 41, 42. *And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, ſaying, If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace: But now they are hid from thine eyes.* Beware that the things belonging to your peace, be not hid from your eyes: Beware that ye be not found among the fooliſh virgins, leſt ye meet with a ſhut door: But labour to be found among the wiſe virgins, having oil in our lamps, that ſo ye may be ready to meet with the bridegroom. He will erect his white throne in the clouds, ere it be long, and then they who will not obey his voice now, ſhall then be ſent away with the devil and his angels, to everlaſting priſon, where they ſhall be tormented through all the ages of eternity.

3. *Walk before the Lord, and be ye perfect:* Ye may ſee this was the charge Abraham got, Gen. xvii. 1. *Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* But it may be, ye will ſay, How ſhall we do that? I anſwer, Walk ſincerely and holily with God; and walk juſtly with men, Rev. xvii. 14. *And they that are with him, are called, and choſen, and faithful:* That is, theſe that are with him labour to walk ſincerely with God, and uprightly with men. There will be none in this army but ſuch. Bleſſed are they, and bleſſed ſhall they be, that ſet themſelves to be his followers: Let the world judge of them as they will, they ſhall be bleſſed; therefore aſſociate yourſelves with them, if ye would be bleſſed here and hereafter.

4. The laſt advice that I give you, at this time, is this, If ye have walked in crooked paths, labour to come off, and make them ſtraight; that is, if ye have complied with the enemies of the Lord's glory and his truth, acknowledge your offence, and ſeek grace from a gracious God, to return and repent;

repent; *there is mercy with him that he may be feared:* There is mercy for the humble and penitent; as ye may ſee in the parable of the prodigal ſon; how joyfully his father met him, and received him whenever he ſet his face home-ward, and turned from his former courſe. But no mercy for you that are run away from under Chriſt's colours, and are joined with his avowed ſtated enemies; and think that ye have done no wrong; that with the whore, wipes your mouth and ſays, What have we done? We have done no wrong: Ye ſee no ſin in what ye have done. We dare not offer mercy to you; we have offered as far as God in his word hath commanded to be offered to you; and if ye lay claim to it in that condition, we aſſure you from the Lord, that ye ſhall meet with a fearful diſappointment. So ye that have been driven away with the ſtorm, come ye back again: *Return backſliding children, ſaith the Lord, And I will heal your backſlidings.* And as for you that have been labouring to keep his way, and to keep your garments clean, labour to keep them ſo ſtill; and *watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation:* And, when ye are tempted, pray that ye may not be overcome of the temptation. And to him be praiſe.

PREFACE.

MY friends, there were many that flocked to the ordinances, in Chriſt's days, that had not a right end before them; ſuch as the ſcribes, and Phariſees, and Herodians; that came for no other end, but to intangle him in his talk, and to catch at his words, to find an occaſion againſt him whereby they might accuſe him. And alſo, there was a ſort of people that came out of curioſity, that delighted to hear of new things. And I fear there are many ſuch come here; ſome to catch at the words ſpoken, and to find and ſeek advantage, how to reproach the way of God; and ſome are come to hear new things: But, I ſay to ſuch, if ye be come for any of theſe ends, ye ſhall get a ſad ſentence pronounced againſt you. I ſay, if ye get not that ſaid to you, that the women that came to the ſepulchre to ſeek Jeſus Chriſt, got ſaid to them, by the angel, Fear not, it will be a ſad herecoming to you. But if ye can ſay upon good grounds, that it is Jeſus of Nazareth that ye are ſeeking here this night, then, we dare be bold to ſay, Fear not; for ye ſhall be made welcome.

But

But there are a few things that I would require of you, that are come here this night, if ye would profit by your coming. And,

1. I would require of you, to think much of the love of Chriſt to fallen men; that hath done ſo great things for the recovery of men, out of that miſerable condition, they are in by ſinning againſt God. O ſirs! admire and wonder at this admirable love, that is ſo manifeſted in redeeming of loſt ſinners.

2. I require you to think much of the goſpel. O wonder that ever he condeſcended to let you hear tell of Chriſt offered in this goſpel! he hath not dealt ſo with many nations. O admire his love in this to you! for he hath paſt by many nations, great and ſtrong, and never hath let them have this privilege, to hear tell of Chriſt manifeſted in the goſpel; yea, never to have the privilege to have the Bible amongſt them. Ay, ſirs, if ye ſaw the great privilege beſtowed upon you in this, ye would think it well worth all your pains, and all that ye can ſuffer on this account for your duty.

3. I would require you to caſt away all your idols, both of one ſort and other; and give them not Chriſt's room in your hearts any longer. O! remember this, that Chriſt will not dwell where any idol is kindly entertained. O! remember this, that ye muſt part with all your idols, if ye would have Chriſt to be with you.

4. I require of you, who are come here this night, that ye have a right end in your here-coming before you: And if any of you have had wrong ends before your eyes, in coming here, be humbled for it; and, in the time that is, labour to get his glory for your only and chief end in coming to ordinances, otherwiſe ye will not find him in his ordinances, but will loſe your pains in coming to them.

5. I would require of you, that are coming here this night, that ye come empty of all things in yourſelves to his ordinances. O come empty of all your own righteouſneſs, and of all things that wrong his glory; and, remember, that it is the hungry that ſhall be filled with good things, but the full ſhall go away empty. O! labour to come empty to him, and ye ſhall be filled with the fatneſs of his houſe.

SERMON XXXVI.

Upon Canticles i. 7.

Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon: For why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?

NOW, I would aſk this queſtion at you, who are come here this night, *Where are you?* It was the firſt queſtion that was aſked at Adam, after his rebellion, *Adam where art thou?* He was in a miſerable condition, and he had hid himſelf from the preſence of the Lord, when he ſaw his nakedneſs. And ſo I aſk theſe queſtions at you:

1. Where are you? And it may be anſwered, In a ſtate of ſin and miſery; without God, and without Chriſt. O ſirs! is not that a miſerable and fearful condition, to be in a ſtate of ſin; and liable to the wrath of a ſin-revenging God? O! bethink yourſelves, how ye will be able to abide that terrible and juſt ſentence, of a holy and ſin-revenging God, *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting burning, prepared for the devils and his angels.* Know ye not that ye are liable to this, while out of Chriſt, and are ſlighting the free offers of him in the goſpel?

2. Where are your afflictions? I trow they are ſcattered abroad upon many unprofitable objects: Some on one idol, and ſome on another. The worldling hath the world for his object; and the things that he ſeeks is the world, and the things thereof, and he rejects Chriſt. But here is the precious object, that is worthy of all your love, even precious Chriſt. O ſirs! beſtow not your love upon baſe and unprofitable objects.

3. What will ye be, when ye come to be tried by affliction and perſecution? I trow ye will be found out of Chriſt; and then there will be no ſtanding for you: O come! and ſay with the ſpouſe to Chriſt, *Tell me where thou feedeſt, and where thou makeſt thy flocks to reſt at noon.*

The ſpouſe, in the firſt four verſes of this chapter, ſignifies her love to Chriſt, and that he was the only choice of her love. Then, verſe 5. ſhe turns to the daughters of Jeruſalem, and tells them, Though ſhe was black, and ſcorched with perſecutions and afflictions, *&c.* yet ſhe was comely, by being

being beautified with Chriſt's comelineſs; becauſe he had a love to her, and ſhe had a love to him; and this made her beautiful and lovely, even when ſhe was black, by reaſon of perſecutions and afflictions.

And here, in the words read, ſhe turns to Chriſt, and directs her ſpeech to him, *Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth*, &c. And there are three things in her ſpeech to him:

I. The title which ſhe gives him, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth:* And this ſets forth the great love which ſhe had to him.

II. We have her petition, or the thing which ſhe ſeeks of Chriſt: *Tell me where thou feedeſt.* This is not meant where he feeds himſelf, but where he feeds his flock; and where he makes them to lie down in the hot and ſcorching time: And here ye have her caſe laid down in a twofold condition. (1.) She was afraid of being miſtaken in her way. (2) The way ſhe takes to get the doubt cleared to her, ſhe comes to the right hand for help; ſhe comes to Chriſt, and ſeeks his leading; which holds forth the grace of faith to be in exerciſe; and that ſhe had the ſenſe of his attributes upon her ſpirit; and that there was food and ſafety to be found in him.

III The third thing in the words, is the argument that ſhe makes uſe of, to inforce her love to him, and to ſignify her reſpect, to his feeding, and her confidence in his ſafety and hiding.

Now, from this head, I ſhall lay down this doctrine.

DOCT. I. *That there is in Jeſus Chriſt incomparable lovelineſs.*

And to clear and confirm this point, read Canticles v. 10. to the cloſe; where ſhe hath a lovely apprehenſion of all the parts of his perſonal comelineſs: And when ſhe hath gone through all the parts of his perſonal comelineſs, ſhe thinks not that enough; but all that ſhe can ſpeak of his beauty and comelineſs, is far below her thoughts of the ſame; and therefore to advance her commendation of him, ſhe ſums all up in a heap together, and ſays, *He is altogether lovely and amiable!* Whatever others think of him, ſhe thinks him incomparable, and compleatly comely; *there is no ſpot in him.*

If ye would aſk, what is his beauty! It may be anſwered, that it cannot be named; it is paſt the comprehenſion and capacity of all the ages and generations of eternity to give it a name; yea, it paſſeth the wit of angels, theſe glorified ſpirits, to give it a name; wherefore are the angels ſaid to have wings, but to cover their faces; becauſe, as it were, they bluſh and are aſhamed to look to that beauty and matchleſs lovelineſs that is in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Ay, any thing that was ever ſeen, or conceived of him by the creatures, was but a

darkning of his glory. When he appeared upon Mount Sinai to the Iſraelites, at the giving of the law, it was ſuch a ſight as made them to quake. They durſt not hear that voice, and they beſought Moſes to hide it from them; they thought it ſo terrible to behold ſuch an obſcure ſight of that glory. All this was a hiding of his power, and a darkning of that inacceſſible glory, and tranſcendent excellency that is in him. O ſirs! is he not lovely to them, that gets a ſaving ſight of him? They cannot but ſee him incomparable and matchleſs in his lovelineſs.

And now from this doctrine, I ſhall lay down ſome uſes.

Uſe 1. Is of reproof, to all folk who are ſpiritually blinded, and ſee not this lovelineſs that is in Chriſt. O ſirs! open your eyes and behold Chriſt's comelineſs, that is altogether lovely and delightſome to poor believers that get a right ſight of him.

Uſe 2. Is of reproof, to ſuch as prefer other things to Chriſt; for ſuch declare plainly, that they have no love to Chriſt in exerciſe: for if they had love to him in exerciſe, they would be loth to let other things compete with Chriſt, that is the pleaſanteſt object of the believer's love; for, to the believer, there is nothing beſides him.

Uſe 3. Is of inſtruction. Is it ſo, that Chriſt is the lovelieſt object? O then! come to Chriſt, and take him for your ſoul's love, and ye ſhall never rue it. O! come and make him your love. O beſtow your love upon him, that is well worthy of all your love!

A ſecond doctrine from the words is this,

DOCT. II. *That folk ought to bear a vehement love to Chriſt.*

And from this doctrine I ſhall take notice of theſe three things:

I. What of Chriſt it is, that we ſhould love.

II. How we ſhould love Chriſt.

III. That we ſhould give ſome teſtimonies of our love to Chriſt.

I. As to the firſt, what of Chriſt it is, that we ſhould love: And here there are two caſes of conſcience, of ſoul-concernment to be ſpoken to.

1. And the firſt queſtion, which is a caſe of conſcience, is this, *How ſhall I know what of Chriſt I ſhould love?* In anſwer to this queſtion, I ſay ye ſhould love all Chriſt. There is nothing of Chriſt, or of Chriſt's concernments, but we ſhould love it. But I ſhall name a few things of Chriſt in particular, that we ſhould love. And,

(1.) We ſhould love Chriſt's perſon. O ſirs! he is lovely in his Perſon; as ye may ſee by the ſtrain of the commendation, whereby the Bride ſets out the lovelineſs of his parts. She

She puts a high eſteem upon them all, to make others delight in him with her; and often times ſhe repeats them over, to make others to take a ſecond look of him, and to fall in love with him.

(2.) We ſhould have an univerſal love to all his laws and ordinances, and to his image in his people, wherever it is to be ſeen: For all his laws and ordinances are lovely, and his people who bear his image are lovely, becauſe they are beautified through his comelineſs.

2. A ſecond queſtion, which is a caſe of conſcience, is this, *How ſhall I know if I have a real love to Chriſt?* And in anſwer to this, ye may know your love to Chriſt by theſe marks following, if ye find all of them, or any of them, in yourſelves.

(1.) If ye be win to love all Chriſt, in all his three offices, as a prophet to teach you, as a prieſt to ſacrifice and intercede for you, and as a king to rule in and over you. Alas! I fear that the moſt part of you are unwilling to love Chriſt in his kingly office, now in this day, when it is much controverted by men: Have they not robbed him of his kingly power and authority, and ſet his crown upon the head of a mortal worm, by that uſurped ſupremacy. O ſirs! if ye would ſhew your love to Chriſt in vehemency, ye muſt contend for that part of his prerogatives, that men have aſſumed to themſelves. O let your love be ſeen in this now!

(2.) If ye would be at the knowledge of your loving Chriſt truly, try it by your loving of Chriſt alone; ye muſt love nothing beſides him. There are many that would join Chriſt and idols together, but ye muſt love him only; he muſt have no competitor here, neither muſt ye love him for any thing that is his, for he will reject ſuch ſpurious love as that. There are ſome indeed that love Chriſt becauſe he hath purchaſed ſalvation; but that is not true love, but a loving of him for his goodneſs to the creature: But true love will love himſelf alone, and true love will love him for himſelf, and not for any thing that is his, or that is with him.

(3.) Would ye know your love to Chriſt, then ſee if ye love him in his croſs, and in ſuffering for him? and, with Moſes, chooſe the croſs before the crown of Egypt, and prefer afflictions with the people of God before the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon. O ſirs! have any of you ſeen him lovely in his croſs? Have any of you ſeen him lovely in your afflictions and trials, that ye have met with upon his account, and for owning of his way?

(4.) If ye would know your love to Chriſt, ye muſt evidence it by your loving and keeping all his commandments; ye muſt have a reſpect to all his commandments, and muſt be as careful to keep theſe of them that are moſt croſs to your corrupt inclina-

inclinations, as the reſt of them that your temper agrees more with for the keeping of his commandments is an evidence that ye love him, John xiv. 15.

(5.) Ye muſt evidence your true love to Chriſt by your hatred at your idols, of whatſoever kind; ye muſt part with your beſt beloved idols and predominant luſts, for he will not be yours or regard you, if ye regard ſin in your hearts, Pſalm lxvi 18.

(6.) If ye would know your love to Chriſt, ye muſt evidence it by your loving of his image in his people. There is a great difference betwixt enemies and friends in this; for Chriſt's friends, that have true love to him, love ther brethren, becauſe they have his image ſtamped upon them; but the wicked, who are his enemies, hate his image, perſecute his people for his ſake, and by this they declare that we and they have not one Father.

(7.) If ye would know your love to Chriſt, ye muſt make it evident by your loving of the true church, the temple of God, that is his glory.

(8.) If ye would know your love to Chriſt; ye muſt evidence it by your loving of his kingdom; ye muſt pray for the coming of his kingdom in this world, when all things ſhall be accompliſhed that he hath promiſed in his word, concerning the advancemnt of the kingdom of grace, and ye muſt love, and long for his ſecond coming in judgment; when all things ſhall be rightly ordered, by his juſt and final determination and all wrongs ſhall be righted, and put to a period.

II. Now, as to the ſecond particular from this doctrine, which is this, How ſhall we love Chriſt? This queſtion being alſo a caſe of conſcience, in anſwer to it, I ſay,

1. Ye muſt love him ſincerely. It muſt be a ſincere ſoul-love that ye bear to him; and not a formal hypocritical love; but a ſincere ſoul-love, is that which will give peace in the end. O! how loves a true child his father, with a heart-love! And it muſt be ſuch a love as this that you bear unto Chriſt.

2. Ye muſt love him vehemently; it muſt not be a coldrife love that ye bear to Chriſt, that will ſoon be quenched with a ſmall diſcouragement or cooled by a cold ſtormy blaſt; but it muſt be a love with great vehemency.

3. It muſt be a conſtant love, an abiding love; it muſt not be a flaſh and away again; but it muſt abide always. Much unconſtancy of love to Chriſt, hath appeared in this generation. O! how many who once ſeemed to be lovers of Chriſt indeed, have either changed their love, or elſe it is grown very cold?

III. The

III. The third particular from the doctrine, is, this ye ſhould give ſome teſtimonies of your love to Chriſt; and that ye muſt do.

1. By loving Chriſt for himſelf and for nothing of his purchaſe. O! ſeek him for himſelf; and love him for himſelf; otherwiſe your love will not be accepted.

2. By loving him with a ſtrong love, and not with a poor, feckleſs love.

3. By loving him with a continual love. This grace of love hath the preheminence of all the other graces of the Spirit: Faith and hope evaniſheth; but love abides your companion here and in heaven.

4. By loving him with a fighting love: For, in loving him ye muſt maintain a conſtant warfare againſt the devil, the world and the fleſh: And ye muſt reſiſt the wrongs, and reſent the affronts that men are putting upon the noble captain of our ſalvation. Alas! what a ſinful tampering with, and yielding to enemies hath there been, which is a grievous ſinning againſt him? There hath been a declared war from the beginning againſt him, by his enemies. O therefore! go forth ye that would prove yourſelves valiant for him and his cauſe, and reſent the wrongs done to our noble captain Chriſt; and tell his enemies, that ye and they ſhall never agree, for what they have done, and are doing againſt him. When ye ſee they have robbed him of his glory, if ye were true children ye would be more concerned with this than ye are. Ay, ſirs, if ye were true children, the inroads the enemies have made upon the royal prerogatives of Jeſus Chriſt, would have made a road through your heart, ere they had got him robbed after this manner. Alas! ſirs, it is ſad to ſee miniſters and profeſſors ſit ſilent and unconcerned, when our Lord is ſo greatly wronged, by enemies and profeſſors of this generation.

Now, from what I have ſaid, I ſhall lay down theſe two uſes.

Uſe 1. Is of inſtruction. O be inſtructed to go forth and ſhew your reſolution, that ye will be for Chriſt though none ſhould accompany you: Ay, though ye ſhould be left alone by all the world, and be for a ſign and a wonder in Iſrael; and though all appear to be againſt you this may not diſcourage you: When both enemies and profeſſors are condemning your teſtimony in a great part, appear ye for him by your practice, as well as by your profeſſion. O come and lay all down at his feet, and prig not with him! O ſirs! give him your all, ſtand not with him, of your life, and all that you have, and bluſh and be aſhamed, that ye have no more to loſe for him. O come! and ſay, All that I have is Chriſt's;

and

and then he ſhall add that pleaſant word, I, and all that I have is thine.

Uſe 2. Is of advice. O! be adviſed rather to diſpleaſe all other things, than in the leaſt to diſpleaſe Chriſt. *I charge you that ye awake him not till he pleaſe.* O ſirs! beware of doing any thing that may diſpleaſe him: Diſpleaſe friends and relations, and all others, before ye diſpleaſe our Lord. Obey him in all things that he commands you to do; for this will be pleaſing to God, and comfortable to you; whereas, pleaſing of other things will prove ſorrow to you in the end, and keep his room empty when he withdraws himſelf. The ſpouſe lets none come in his place when he is away, like a chaſte wife that will ly alone when her huſband is abſent. And, O ſirs! entertain this noble grace of love, for it will be your companion in heaven to all eternity.

A third doctrine from the word is.

Doct. III. *That as there is a relation betwixt a ſhepherd and his flock, ſo there is a relation betwixt Chriſt and believers, who are his ſheep.*

For proof of this ſee Iſa. xl, 11. *He ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd: He ſhall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with young.*

And from this doctrine, I ſhall,

I. Shew you wherein this relation doth appear in Chriſt.

II. Shew you what duties this relation binds upon us.

I. Now, as to the firſt head from this doctrine, *viz.* wherein doth the relation betwixt Chriſt and his ſheep ſtand? This relation ſtand in theſe things:

1. It appears to ſtand in Chriſt's feeding of his ſheep in his own paſture; and there are ſeveral kinds of paſtures, wherein he feedeth his people. And,

(1.) His paſtures are wholeſome paſtures, wherein his ſheep muſt feed, and wherein he does feed them, Pſal. xxiii. 2. *He maketh me to lie down in green paſtures; He leadeth me beſide the ſtill waters.* The Lord muſt lead them, as other ſhepherds do, and not leave them to wander among the flocks of his companions. Chriſt hath ſome companions, to ſpeak after the manner of men, that ſet up their ſigns for his ſigns, to deceive his flock; but he is the good ſhepherd of Iſrael, that both feeds and leads his people, and keeps them from following the voice of ſtrangers, John x. 4, 5.

(2.) His paſture, wherein he feedeth his people is a fat paſture, it ſatisfieth them with marrow and fatneſs, Pſal. lxiii. 5. It is a place of marrow and fatneſs; it is a place of room and largeneſs: A large field they may not wander out of it, neither are they ſtraitned in it for want of food, for in it their ſouls are filled with good things.

(3.) It

(3.) It is a ſecure paſture: In it he governs his people, and none ſhall make them afraid. He doth not promiſe to keep them in ſafety from affliction, but he promiſeth to be with them in the fire and in the water that they ſhall not prevail againſt them; and at laſt to deliver them out of all their afflictions, and by this they are ever in ſafety and ſecurity.

2. He appears to ſtand in the relation of a ſhepherd to his people.

(1.) By gathering in the ſtraying ſheep by his ordinances, and by his ſtaff of government.

(2.) By his ſaving of them that halt; he will make the halters to be made whole, and will let them ſee their duty more clearly in a dark day, than they ſaw it.

(3.) By his gathering his ſheep into his fold. If ye be Chriſt's ſheep, ye will not get leave to ſtay out of his fold; and if ye get leave to go out after the flocks of his companions, and to ſtray after other ſhepherds, it is a token that ye are not of Chriſt's flock. You that are ignorant of his way, and would be taught ſhall not want leading into his fold. Thoſe that would fain be in his fold, but cannot win, becauſe they know not the way, he will lead them in hither; for *he leads the blind in ways they know not*, Iſa. xlii. 16. But theſe who are wilfully blind, and will not be led by him, he will let them fall among ſtrangers and ſtrayers to their ruin.

(4.) By carrying the young and tender of the flock in his boſom. Peter was bid feed Chriſt's Lambs, before he was bid feed his ſheep, John xxi. 15. which ſhews that he is concerned, in the firſt place, and hath a tender care over young and tender Chriſtians, that are newly begun to ſeek him. This ſhould teach miniſters and profeſſors, to take great care of Chriſt's young and tender believers, becauſe a little harſhneſs will diſcourage them. O be careful to feed Chriſt's little ones be tender of them and do not *break the bruiſed reed, nor quench the ſmoking flax*, Matth. xii. 20. Oh! it is a ſad charge that will be given in againſt miniſters and profeſſors in this age, whoſe practice hath been a ſtumbling block, and diſcouraging to poor tender Chriſtians, that deſired to follow the Lord ſincerely.

(5.) He watcheth and ſtand's feeding his flock, his own people, with his two ſtaves, beauty and bands; and he hath a maſs of iron in his hand, to break in pieces his church's enemies. He is not ſitting or lying, but he is ſtanding; which ſhews forth his readineſs to do for his people.

(6.) He will be countable for his flock to his Father, according to that word, John xvii. 12. *Thoſe that thou gaveſt me I have kept and none of them is loſt.* Ye that are his ſheep need not fear, for neither devils nor men ſhall be able to pluck you out of Chriſt's hand; he will preſent you ſpotleſs before

the throne of God; not one of you ſhall be loſt: All his angels ſhall be gathered together, and all his children ſhall be gathered together, and brought home at night, and there ſhall not one of them be loſt.

II. Now as to the ſecond head from the doctrine, which is, What duties this relation, which is betwixt Chriſt, the ſhepherd, and us the ſheep, binds upon us. And,

1. It binds this duty upon us, that we hear his voice, in his word, in his goſpel, in his calls and diſpenſations. It obligeth us to anſwer his calls by obeying his voice, and ſubmitting to him as prophet, prieſt, and king in his church.

2. It binds this duty on us, not to hear the voice of ſtrangers. Ye muſt not obey any other voice but his voice. O ſirs! how can ye hear hirelings that have intruded themſelves upon the labours of the faithful miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt; theſe devouring wolves that are erroneous in their doctrine, and ſcandalous in their practice and converſation? O! ceaſe to hear all theſe, whatever they call themſeves, *whoſe inſtruction cauſeth to err from the words of knowledge*, Prov. xix. 27. Hear not any that condemns duty and gives a toleration to any iniquity: Hear them not, and ye ſhall know them by their fruit; for they that are dark and myſterious in their doctrine and application, concerning the ſins and duties of the day, and the teſtimonies of the truth, owned by God, and ſealed by the blood of his faithful ſervants; I ſay, all ſuch whatever they have been, hear them not, for theſe are voices that ye ſhould not hear: Theſe that are liable to church-cenſure, high or low, by being guilty of ſuch ſins as would have ſuſpended them from their office, theſe ye ſhould not hear until their ſins be acknowledged and forſaken: For though we want church judicatories to complain to, yet we have a judgment of diſcretion to know our duty: Therefore hear them not, leſt, by being partakers of their ſins, ye alſo ſhare in their judgments.

3. It binds this duty upon us, to be harmleſs; and, with Paul, to endeavour to *keep a conſcience void of offence towards God, and towards men*, Acts xxiv. 16. Alas! ſirs, when ye comply with ſinful courſes, ye give great offence many ways; for thereby ye both offend God and the people of God, and ye harden the enemies of God in their ſins. O! ſeek for that harmleſneſs, that conſiſts with holineſs; but do not ceaſe to contend for wronged truth, neither neglect any known duty: For, if ye were able to bring down all the enemies of truth, and of the church of God, it would be no harm, if ye do juſtice on God's enemies, in recovering the work of God, it is your duty and there is no harm in it.

4. It binds this duty upon us, to be uſeful in our day, according to our place and ſtation. The ſheep are uſeful creatures;

tures; they are both meet and clothing; I ſay, it is all your duty to be uſeful in your ſtation. And if ye would be uſeful and faithful to the Lord, O! labour to be his ſheep: For ye muſt be in him, before ye can act and do for him.

And now I ſhall raiſe ſome uſes from this doctrine.

Uſe 1. Is of inſtruction. If ye would be his people, and be uſeful to him and for him, then be inſtructed to take him for your ſhepherd and here no more the voice of ſtrangers, but give up yourſelves to be led and taught by him; for, he is the faithful leader of his people.

Uſe 2. Is of advice. O carry his ſheep, and he will not fail you; he will be reſt to the weary; ſprings of water to the thirſty; and bread to the hungry: And he will make you chew your cud on former experiences, when ye will think that ye will die for want. O then! carry as his ſheep, and ye ſhall experience his goodneſs.

Uſe 3. Is of encouragement to all the true ſheep of Chriſt. When all your ſhepherds will not do their duty he will ſay, my ſhepherds have not done their duty, in ſeeking, ſtrengthning, binding up, and gathering my ſtraying ſheep, therefore I will do it myſelf: I ſay, when his ſhepherds fail in this, he ſays, he will ſearch for and ſeek his loſt ſheep, and feed them upon the mountains of Iſrael. Alas! our ſhepherds did leave us in our greateſt ſtraits. When ſnares did abound in the land there was none to warn us: So the land is involved in many great abominations, of one kind and another. They lay by from their miniſtry, as if they had not been obliged to ſtand upon Zion's walls, to cry aloud and give the people faithful warning. But here is a faithful ſhepherd, that will do all himſelf, and will do all his work, in faithfulneſs to his peoples comfort.

The fourth doctrine from the word is this,

DOCT. IV. *That when the ſpouſe of Chriſt knows not what to do, to avoid ſin and ſuffering, he both knows how, and will help her: becauſe he is her leader.*

The ſpouſe was in a ſtrait here, and therefore ſhe ſays, *Tell me where thou feedeſt*, &c. He leads here in green paſtures: And theſe are the means whereby he leads her:

(1.) He leads her by his word,

(2.) He leads her by his Spirit. And theſe two muſt go together; for the Spirit will not lead you without the word, nor the word without the Spirit: For the Spirit, without the word, is but like the lamp without the light, and cannot be uſeful to ſalvation, as the deluded quakers and other enthuſiaſts aſſert: So neither can the word, without the Spirit, lead you; for it is like the lamp without the light. So theſe two, the word and the Spirit, muſt of neceſſity go together, in the Lord's leading of his people.

(3.) He leads his people by directing them in the way of their duty. This is a confuſed time wherein we live; ſo that people cannot obſerve the difference betwixt duty and ſin: Every one pleads that their own way is right. Therefore I deſire you to go to God for direction in his way; many ſeem to be ſtumbled and offended at his way; but theſe that have his cauſe rightly ſtated in their hearts, ſhall neither ſtumble nor be offended at it: And I think none will bide unſtumbled at it, but theſe that have his cauſe rightly ſtated in their judgment, and the real impreſſion of the duties of the day ſettled in their hearts.

(4) He leads his people, by ſtrengthning them with inward ſtrength, to ſtand out againſt the ſtormy wind of perſecution. O ſeek ſtrength from him to ſtand! for ye have the ſtorm in your face; and all that ye have ſeen yet in this land, is little or nothing in compariſon to what is to come; for it will be ſeven times harder and worſe to ſuffer. But, O ſirs! think not of going back to defection; for there is life enough in him, and ſtrength to make you ſtand in the evil day, if ye continue in his way; for all that he takes in under his ſhadow, he will be to them *a covering in the day of war; a hiding-place from the wind; a covert from the tempeſt; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land*, Pſal. cxl. 7. Iſa. xxxii. 2. He will give them refreſhful fruit, that will be pleaſant to their taſte: He will hide them in the ſcorching day of perſecution, and will be a ſhelter to them in all their ſtraits, and take them into the chambers of his protection, Iſa xxvi 20. where there is pleaſure and ſafety to be found: Where he gives honour to his friends, and makes his fruit ſweet to them; and at laſt will admit them to his chambers of delight, in his father's houſe, which is an high honour indeed; for there they ſhall have both protection and perfection. O ſirs! ſeek not peace with enemies; do not ſeek their proſperity.

But ye will ſay, if we be not at peace with them, we will loſe the world, and it may be our lives alſo: It is true, if ye be faithful in the Lord's cauſe, ye may loſe the world, and your life; but if ye be not faithful, then ye will loſe your ſouls and that is more than your life and the world both: And if ye venture upon the way, wherein he ſees affliction beſt for you, ye ſhall not be in the afflictions alone, for he will be with you in them, and under them; for, in fire and water he is with his people: And in your difficulties he will give you his counſel; for he is the councellor of his people, O therefore! come and ſeek counſel and direction from him, who is the only wiſe councellor of his people, and ye ſhall find love in him, for he is lovely indeed in all his dealings, both in mercy and

and juſtice. O therefore! come and ſeek him to be your leader and commander.

Now, I ſhall ſpeak to ſome uſes.

Uſe 1. Is of advice. O ſirs beware of ſinning, for it is the cauſe of all our miſery; it makes God an enemy unto us, and it turns all our mercies to become curſes unto us. O! employ him for the diſcovery of ſin; and as it is diſcovered, confeſs and forſake it.

Uſe 2. Is of experience. Ye ſee the people of God are incident and liable to many troubles and afflictions; be not anxious anent this, if he be pleaſed to lay them on you; but labour to carry well under the croſs, for it is the way that his people hath trode in, in former times; through croſſes and tribulations is the way to glory.

Uſe 3. Is of conſolation, to all the truly godly. Chriſt will tell you where to ſeek help; and that in him is help, both from ſin and ſuffering. O employ him for comfort in all your afflictions! and ſeek to be led by him in the way of truth. Ye know not what ye may meet with ere it be long. O come and employ Chriſt for all that ye ſtand in need of! for there is a ſad day coming on theſe lands: A day of anger and indignation is coming through theſe lands, to take vengeance upon theſe that would not that he ſhould reign over them. O! flee in to him to be hid, for he is coming on his red horſe of ſeverity, and all that is out of him will be deſtroyed in the fire of jealouſy. O! flee in to him, who can hide you in the day of war. O labour to be found in him, that is the God of heaven and earth! in whom is pleaſure and delight for evermore.

PREFACE.

THIS is a time wherein miniſters have great diſcouragements to preach: There is,

1. The oppoſition of a powerful and wicked enemy, and this is great diſcouragement: This will make a miniſter undergo much toil and hazard, and likely loſe his life, if he would follow out his miniſtry and make full proof of it. But,

2. There is a greater diſcouragement than this, and that is the differences and diviſions that are among profeſſors and mini-

miniſters. We cannot attain to a joint carrying on of the work. Some are caſting down what others are building up; yea, ſome are caſting down what once they builded up themſelves: This is a great diſcouragement. But yet I think,

3 There is a greater than this; and that is the fruitleſneſs of the goſpel. Oh! the goſpel is fruitleſs; we ſee few ſtrangers to God converted by it; we ſee few who are going on in the ſinful courſes of the time, reclaimed by it: We have often told you of your iniquities, and ye will not forſake them. So, that if it were not to diſcharge our conſciences, and to give a teſtimony, it would appear almoſt uſeleſs to mention them any more: We ſee few of the ſtraighteſt and ſtrickeſt of profeſſors bettered by it; for they are rather growing more indifferent as to the matters of God; more ſlothful in keeping up Chriſtian ſocieties; more negligent of their ſecret duties; more carnal in their converſe and converſation. Oh! this is ſad; this is great diſcouragement; this makes us fear, that the goſpel this day is plagued to the moſt part; that it is ſent to harden their hearts, deafen their ears, blind their eyes, as Iſaiah got in his commiſſion, chap. vi. 10. O! let us pray to the Lord for his preſence with this piece of work; that it may have a bleſſed fruit.

SERMON XXXVII.

CANTICLES i. 7.

Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth, where thou feedeſt, where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon; For why ſhould I be as one that turneth aſide by the flocks of thy companions?

THERE are ſeveral ſorts of folk, that have ſinful wiſhes and deſires: The open and avowed enemies of God, they deſire the utter ruin of his work and extirpation of his people: Voluptuous perſons, they deſire the ſatisfaction of their baſe luſts: Ambitious men, they deſire great honour and preferment in a world: Covetous men, deſire riches: And hypocrites an eſteem and name of religion amongſt the profeſſors thereof. But, my friends, I would have your deſires to go out after Chriſt and his ſalvation; alſo, I would have

have you going to him with the ſpirit of the ſpouſe, *Tell me, O thou whom my ſoul loveth*, &c.

After the inſcription of this ſong, which is verſe 1. the ſpouſe ſpeaks firſt, and directs her ſpeech, Firſt, to Chriſt; as ver. 2, 3, 4. Secondly, To the viſible profeſſors; as ver. 5, 6. Thirdly, She turns again to Chriſt; as ver. 7. I ſay, ſhe ſpeaks firſt to Chriſt, ſhewing her wiſh for the kiſſes of his mouth; that is, the kindly expreſſions of his love and familiarity: The reaſon is, his love is more pleaſant ſtrengthning and refreſhing than wine; which is confirmed from the ſavourneſs of his ointments; that is, his graces; the pouring forth whereof, makes believers love him; as ver. 2, 3. Next, ſhe puts up a ſuit unto him, for the powerful working of his ſpirit; which ſhe preſſeth with an engagement to advance ſwiftly towards himſelf, and preſently obtains her ſuit; for, ſhe is brought into his chambers; that is, nearneſs with himſelf; which was effectual to the filling of her heart with great and ſpiritual joy; wherefore ſhe will remember his love above all creature comforts. And then for confirmation, is added, That *the upright love him*, as verſe 4. She ſpeaks, *2dly*, To the viſible profeſſors, ſhewing, That though ſhe was black with corruptions and croſſes, as the tents of Kedar, yet ſhe was comely with graces and comforts, as the curtains of Solomon: Wherefore ſhe labours to diſſuade them from looking only upon her blackneſs, ſhe being ſcorched with the ſun of perſecution, raiſed againſt her by the children of the viſible church, who did put her to keep the vineyards; that is, to labour under painful and reproachful ſuffering. Howbeit, ſhe more carefully reſents her ſins and infirmities, confeſſing and lamenting her ſloth and negligence, in not keeping her own vineyard, which was her particular graces and talents, ver. 5, 6. And then, in the 3d place, ſhe turns again unto Chriſt, as in the text.

Now, there are in theſe words three things,

I. The title which the ſpouſe giveth to Chriſt.

II. The thing which ſhe ſeeks of him.

III. The reaſon of her petition.

I. The title which the ſpouſe giveth to Chriſt, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth!* This title holds out her great eſteem of him, and affection to him O! if every one of you could ſay unto him, *Thou whom my ſoul loveth*, ye would be a pleaſant and happy company: For no hypocrite, for all their flouriſhing profeſſion, and the fair compliments they give unto Chriſt, can call him ſo.

II. The thing which the ſpouſe ſeeks of Chriſt, is ſet down in a twofold ſuit; the firſt is, *Tell me where thou feedeſt*: where feeding is not underſtood in a paſſive ſenſe, that is, where he feeds himſelf, as chap. vi. 2. but in an active ſenſe,

that

that is, where he feeds others, as Isa. xl. 11. O that we were all careful to know the pastures, whereunto Christ doth direct you, and where he will feed you!

The second suit is, *Tell me where thou makes thy flocks to rest at noon*, the noon of the day; that is, the middle of the day, which is the hot and scorching time of the day. So she seeks to know where he gives his people rest and refreshment under persecution. If ye were careful to know this, ye would not flee in under the shadow of his enemies for protection from their cruelty and rage.

III. The reason or argument, whereby the spouse enforceth her petition, *For why should I be as one that turneth aside after the flocks of thy companions?* Where, by companions, is to he understood, every thing that is to be set up beside Christ, or esteemed above him, as lusts and idols; also, every one who leads people away from Christ, as heretics. And, in general, all who lead people from their integrity in any course of error or defection from Christ, who are in so far his companions; for the text (as is clear in itself) doth comprehend all, though there be vastly different sorts and sizes amongst them, whom to follow, were to turn aside: And certainly, whoever they were, she hath her eye most upon these, whom most readily she might follow in a course of defection, having in herself a fear of snares, and new failings, from the sense of her blackness by her sins and infirmities, as ver. 5. And accordingly, in the following verse, Christ directs her to look to the footsteps of the faithful that went before her, and to follow the public ordinances dispensed by true and faithful ministers, a great part of whose charge is to keep people right in dangerous times, Eph. iv. 12,——16. O that there were this care in every one of you, in this distracting and confusing time!

Now, I shall come to some doctrines from these heads; in laying down of which, I shall not observe every thing that may be pertinently drawn from the same, but only what is most obvious from the words, and may be most suitable to your case. So, from the first head, to wit, the title,

Doct. I. *There is in Christ an exceeding and matchless loveliness.*

This the spouse saith, when she calls him, *O thou whom my soul loveth!* O what a loveliness is in him! *He is the brightness of his father's glory and express image of his person.* Heb. i. 3. *He is fairer than the children of men, with the beauty of wisdom and holiness*, Psal. xlv. 2. O! how lovely is he in his majesty! how lovely in his glory! how lovely in his grace! how lovely in his beauty, and in all his properties! The spouse saw much of his loveliness, when she brake forth in such a commendation of him, Cant. v. 10. to the end. *My beloved is white and ruddy,*

ruddy, the chiefeſt among ten thouſand; his head is as the moſt fine gold, &c. And when ſhe thinks ſhe cannot commend him enough in particulars, ſhe breaks forth in that general expreſſion, *He is altogether lovely!*

Now, a word of uſe. For reproof, firſt, to theſe who ſee no lovelineſs in Chriſt. Ah! though he hath ſhewn himſelf many times to you in his ordinances, yet he hath been a vailed Chriſt unto the moſt part of you; ye have ſeen no comelineſs in him. Is this becauſe there is no comelineſs in him? No; for, *he is altogether lovely.* Is this becauſe he hides his beauty from you? No; for he hath many times ſhewn his face to you in the glaſs of the goſpel, and appeared in his ordinances, as in garments perfumed with aloes, myrrh and caſia, and all odoriferous ſpices: But this is becauſe of your blindneſs, ye will not come forth from your natural ignorance. Ye are like theſe that ſit within doors, when a ſtately ſight is going by, and ſee nothing of it.

Secondly, To theſe who prefer other things to Chriſt The moſt part of you have no eſteem of him, ye look upon ſeveral other things to have more lovelineſs than he. O how baſe is this! the man that is given to his pleaſures, prefers his luſts and idols to Chriſt, and the ſatisfaction thereof to the pleaſing of him: So the drunkard, ſo the unclean perſon, and fornicator, *&c.* The man, whoſe idol is ambition, prefers his naughty, worldly gradeur to Chriſt. The man, whoſe idol is the world, prefers the traſh thereof to Chriſt. O! what an affront and indignity is this to his incomparable excellency! O! my friends, will ye eſteem and prize him above all! Seek through heaven and earth, ye will not find another ſo lovely.

DOCT. II. *As it is peoples duty to ſet their love upon Chriſt, ſo they ſhould contemplate his lovelineſs, eſpecially when they are in a ſtrait, and ſeeking direction from him.*

The ſpouſe here holds out this unto us, calling him, in this her caſe, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth!* Chriſt deſires his people's love. So, John xxi. 15, 16, 17. he puts the queſtion three times to Peter; *Simon, ſon of Jonas, loveſt thou me?* And accordingly Peter confeſſed and avowed his love to Chriſt three times, (according to his thrice denial of him) and appealed the certainty thereof to his omniſcience, who knew all things. And when the daughters of Jeruſalem, chap. vi. 1. were enquiring of the bride, where they might find Chriſt, they contemplate his lovelineſs, calling him twice her beloved; and being convinced of his worth, do ſhew their deſires and purpoſe of ſeeking him! O! what are ye doing! will ye ſet your love upon Chriſt? will ye give him your hearts? will ye call him, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth?*

But, to illuſtrate this doctrine a little, I ſhall ſhew you,

I. What ye ſhould love, if ye would love Chriſt: Or, wherein ye ſhould at all times diſtinctly take up his lovelineſs, eſpecially in your preſent circumſtances, when (as the ſpouſe in the text) ye ought to ſeek direction from him, to know the means wherein he is to be found.

II. How ye ſhould love Chriſt.

III. I ſhall give you ſome marks and evidences whereby ye may know true love: Or, I ſhall ſhew you, how ye ſhall know if ye love him. And then,

IV. I ſhall come to a word of uſe.

I. As the firſt, to wit, what we ſhould love, if ye would love Chriſt; ye ſhould love, 1. His own excellent ſelf; or ye ſhould love him in his perſon, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon the earth that I deſire beſides thee?* O! he is only worthy of your love; angels cannot declare his excellency. And it will be in a manner a darkning of it, for me to ſpeak of it: But, O! think ye much upon him, and count him worthy of all your love?

Secondly, Ye ſhould love him in his offices. The truth of his three offices is generally profeſſed, and ſo little doubted by you, that I need not bring ſcriptures to prove it, which would be tedious. O! his offices are lovely. He is to be loved in his prophetical office; whereby he reveals by his word and Spirit the will of God for our ſalvation. He is to be loved in his prieſtly office: whereby, 1. He hath offered up himſelf a ſacrifice, which is ſufficient both for ſatisfying the ſtrict juſtice of the Father, and making reconciliation for us. And whereby, 2. He is our interceſſor and advocate with the Father. He is to be loved in his kingly office: Whereby, 1. He ſubjects us to himſelf, and makes us voluntarily comply with his will. Whereby, 2. He rules us by his laws, and officers of his own appointment. Whereby, 3. He doth not defend us ſo, that no evil can befal us, but what he ſees meet for our trial, correction, or inſtruction. Whereby, 4. He doth reſtrain our enemies from fulfilling all their deſires, and effectuating their purpoſes. And whereby, 5. He will conquer them all under our feet! O! are not theſe offices lovely? Have ye not love to him in theſe? Many would have him their prieſt; they would be content to be ſaved by the price he hath payed; yet they will not have him their prophet, far leſs their king: They will not ſubmit to his reigning and triumphing in them; but, I tell you, if ye would have an intereſt in him, ye muſt take him as he offers himſelf, and that is is his threefold office. O! what ſay ye to it! Is he not to be loved in theſe?

Thirdly, Ye ſhould love his word, Pſal. cxix. 97. *O how love I thy law!* The Pſalmiſt had vehement affection towards God's

God's law, as that his admirative exclamation imports; he had ſuch an eſteem of his law, that it was better to him than thouſands of gold and ſilver, ver. 72. But I fear the Bible, to the moſt part of you, is a moſt unpleaſant book, otherwiſe ye that cannot read it would be impatient until ye learn it, and ye that can read it would be careful to read it oftner, to underſtand it better, and practiſe it more Alas for your ignorance! Some of you that bring children to be baptized, are as ignorant, as if ye had not lived a month in a land where the Bible is, and where the goſpel is.

Fourthly, Ye ſhould love his church, Pſal. xxvi. 8. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.* O! there is little of this to be found among us; we made little oppoſition to the caſting down of his houſe. The deſolation thereof hath coſt us few ſore hearts. The moſt of us, if we get our own things, are regardleſs whether his work ſink or ſwim, and many will do nothing for his public work. And others do not ſtand to ſtrengthen enemies in their ſuppreſſing and deſigned ruin of it.

Fifthly, Ye ſhould love his ordinances. Theſe are the outward and ordinary means, whereby he communicates to the elect the benefits of his purchaſed redemption: Such as, the reading and preaching of his word, the adminiſtration of his ſacraments, and prayer. If there had been much of this amongſt us, miniſters would not have forborn to diſpenſe, and people to countenance the public ordinances, though the hazard was not ſmall: Alas, for it!

Sixthly, Ye ſhould love his children, 1 John v. 1. *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him.* Oh! there is little of that amongſt us. But, I ſay, it is impoſſible for one child of God to hate another child of God; yea, not to love another child of God as ſuch; howbeit, this love to God's children is not mainly becauſe of their civility, which their religion brings along with it, but becauſe of Chriſt's image which they bear. O! what ſhall I ſay? Ye that are begotten of the ſame Father love one another; and this love, in exerciſe, will make you bear one anothers burdens, encourage and exhort one another to duty; it will make you pity one anothers infirmities, and lament over one another; it will make you faithful to reprove one another, and plead with theſe of you that are blame-worthy, in meekneſs, and in love, and diſcountenance their defections, not out of any prejudice, but out of reſpect to their gain and edification.

Seventhly, Ye ſhould love the afflictions of Chriſt, Heb xi. 26. Ye ſee there Moſes eſteemed the *reproaches of Chriſt greater riches than the treaſures of Egypt.* O? my friends, why will ye ſcar at his ſufferings? Nay, take up his croſs heartſomely,

bind it to you, as your garment, and wear it as your crown, and he will carry you and it both. O love it! for it is lovely, and it ſhall be all paved over with love unto you. The time of your greateſt ſuffering ſhall be the time of your greateſt joy and content: This he hath promiſed, and this ſufferers and martyrs have found.

Eightly, Ye ſhould love his coming, Rev. xxii 20. *Even ſo, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* O what are ye doing? Are ye not loving and longing for his coming to ſet judgment in the earth? Are ye not longing for his appearing to ſhew his mercy unto his church, and his juſtice to his enemies? Are ye not longing for his making your tabernacles of clay to fall about your ears, that your ſouls may be taken up unto the full enjoyment of himſelf? Yea, are ye not longing for his ſecond coming? When he will teſtify his great reſpect to his bride, in ſight of angels and men, kindly inviting her to inherit the kingdom prepared for her, and ſo ſhe ſhall be ever with himſelf. But, I proceed unto the ſecond thing I propoſed to ſpeak unto.

II. As to the ſecond, to wit, how ye ſhould love Chriſt. May I take it for granted, my friends, that you deſire and reſolve to love Chriſt, and are only inquiſitive how ye ſhould do it? O to have you all brought this length! Well, I will ſhew you how,

Firſt, Ye ſhould love Chriſt with ſupremacy of affection, Matt. xxii. 37. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, and all thy mind.* He muſt be chief in your affections; this is to love him with all your hearts, ſoul, and mind. But, ah! how baſe are the moſt part of you? Ye have naughty objects placed higher in your affections than Chriſt; ye have the world, and the pleaſures thereof poſſeſſing the chief places of your hearts. But, I'll tell you, if you would love Chriſt, with a right and true love, ye muſt love him with ſupremacy of affection.

Secondly, Ye ſhould love Chriſt with ardency, of affection; this is to love him with heart, ſoul, and mind. O! who of you can ſay, that thus ye love him? Nay, your hearts with far more fervour, go out after other things than Chriſt. It is not the enjoyment of himſelf, but of ſome idol thing or another, that ye do moſt vehemently and ſtrongly deſire: But I will tell you, Chriſt will never beſtow his love upon the like of you,

Thirdly, Ye ſhould love him with conſtancy of affection: Thus muſt ye love him, if ye would love him rightly. Some of you have thought that you have found a fit of love to him, but ye have been beguiled with yourſelves; ye have turned back to the world, to your ſins, and to all your old lovers, and ye have taken up houſe with them. They that once lay their

their love upon Chriſt, will never lift it again. I grant, indeed, that their love will not be always alike ſtrong, and in exerciſe; yet they will never change him with any other in heaven or in earth.

Fourthly, Ye ſhould love him with ſincerity of affection, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire beſides thee?* This is to love himſelf, or to love him for himſelf. Many of you think ye have a love to Chriſt, but ye miſtake it; it is not true love, it is either a love to him, for what ye would have from him, which ye may really think that no other can give you, and not for himſelf; or elſe a love to what is his, and not at all to him, take it as you will: But, I ſay, true love is a far other thing, it is not ſo baſe and ſpurious; it loves his own excellent ſelf. Now, what think ye of loving him thus? Many of you have been ſadly beguiled in thinking that ye loved him: But, what ſay ye to him! will ye not love him with all your heart, ſoul, and mind?

III. As to the third, to wit, ſome marks and evidences, whereby ye may know true love to Chriſt. Are ye ſo deſirous to love him, that ye are inquiſitive to know whether ye love him or not? O to have you all crying out! How ſhall I know if I love him? I ſay, I will ſhew ſome marks and evidences whereby ye may know it. As,

Firſt, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye will love whole Chriſt, *My beloved is mine and I am his*, ſays the ſpouſe, Song ii. 16. I mean by this, that ye love Chriſt in all the relations that he ſtands in to you; particularly, ye will love him in his threefold office, of Prophet, Prieſt and King. If ye have right love to him, your affections will not deſpiſe or devide theſe his offices. Many of you think ye love him, but ye will not receive him as he offers himſelf: To ſpeak ſo, there may be ſomething in him that ye like well, but there is ſomething again that ye have no liking of; and I tell you plainly, that in his account ye are not his lovers, but his haters; and not his friends but his enemies. O! what ſay ye to it? There is nothing in Chriſt to be caſten out with.

Secondly, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this; ye will love Chriſt alone, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I*, &c. True love will not admit of a rival with Chriſt: Ye muſt either love him alone, or not love him at all; he will not accept of a heart divided between him and your idols, *No man can ſerve two maſters*: Now, if ye have any thing ſetting up beſides Chriſt in your affections, ye have not true love to him. What ſhall we then ſay of the moſt part, who have other lovers ſet up in their affections above Chriſt.

Thirdly, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this, ye will love the kingdom of Chriſt; your hearts will cry

out

out as ye are taught, Mat. vi 10. *Thy kingdom come.* Theſe whoſe hearts and affections Chriſt gains, and whom he eſpouſes to himſelf, do likewiſe eſpouſe his concerns. O we wonder of the unconcernedneſs of this profeſſing generation, with the proſperity of Chriſt's kingdom. How do ye think that ye can bear the evidence of true-love to himſelf? We wonder what we are doing, that we are not wreſtling for the advancement of his, and the deſtruction of the kingdom of Satan. O wreſtle for it: O pray for it. Men would have you to pray otherwiſe; they would have you to pray,——*Save their king:* That prayer is not conſiſtent with this, *Thy kingdom come,* Ye are not to pray at their direction, neither are ye to direct ſuch a ſuit or ſpeech (call it as ye will) unto God for it is not agreeable to his will; it is not a ſeeking ſalvation to him. We wiſh him that, if he be reconcileable to God; but it ſpeaks out (as in the enemies own ſenſe) a wiſhing preſervation to him in his perſon and government: For our parts, we dare wiſh no ſuch thing. O that would draw deep; yea, it would infer an homologation of his government as right and lawful. It is but a poor ſubterfuge to ſay that,——*Save the king,* is the ſame with, *Let the king live:* Suppoſing it were ſo, yet we muſt be far from thinking it, or ſaying it. Let him live; what is that? Let him live (as he calls himſelf) a king: Who can own him ſo? Let him live in the poſſeſſion of the throne; let him live and rage; let him live and tyrannize; God forbid. If the law of God, and the laws of the land were put in execution he would not live long.

Again, I know ſome will ſay, that, from 1 Tim. ii. 1. we are commanded to make *prayers and interceſſions for all men, for kings and all that are in authority:* But we muſt underſtand that prayer to be ſpecificated to that all, for whom he gave himſelf a ranſom, ver. 6. which was not certainly, for all and every individual man of every kind and degree, (otherwiſe all would be ſaved) but only for ſome of all kinds and degrees of men: So he gave himſelf a ranſom for all, that is, of all ranks, not for every one of all ranks. See for this John xvii. 9. and alſo the famous Gilleſpie's miſcellany queſtions. Now there is no doubt but we ought to pray for theſe all, for whom Chriſt died, and amongſt others, for kings; for he hath his own elect among thoſe of that degree: But that doth not ſay, that we ſhould pray for that tyrant, or any other ſtated enemy of God. Whatever others pray for unto him, we can pray for nothing but ſudden and ſad temporal vengeance upon him, his throne, and all the men of his practices. We cannot ſee the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, but as a neceſſary mean conducible thereunto, we muſt ſeek the downfal and deſtruction of his enemies. O friends! pray much for the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom: It is the

duty

duty, I think, will have moſt ſucceſs. Our appearances againſt his enemies have bad ſucceſs: Our contending for truth has had little ſucceſs; and we have great need that our prayers ſhould have ſome. Now, I ſay, if ye have true love to Chriſt, ye will have great reſpect unto his kingdom. But, ah! the moſt part of you, if ye get your own kingdom, care not what comes of his: This is evident by your practice, for we will not venture for God, ye will not appear on his ſide, ye run to your own houſes and lurkings, and let his houſe lie waſte. O ſeek to love himſelf! and then ye will get zeal to his concerns.

Fourthly, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this; ye will love theſe who bear the image of Chriſt, 1 John v. 1. *Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth alſo him that is begotten of him.* But, ah! there is little of this love among you. Ye have little ſympathy with his children in their afflictions; ye will not receive them into your houſes, or be uſeful or comfortable to them, becauſe of the laws of men, and for fear leſt they perſecute you for it. Well, I ſay, examine yourſelves, whether or no ye love theſe, that ye think do bear the image of Chriſt; for aſſuredly, if ye love himſelf, ye will love theſe; and if ye love them upon the account of his image, that argues your love unto him.

Fifthly, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this, ye will endeavour the keeping of all the commands of Chriſt, John xiv. 15. *If ye love me, keep my commandments.* There he requires the keeping of his commandments as the ſign of their love unto him. O friends! as ye love him, do his will; if there were love amongſt us, there would be more obedience. Now, ye that continue in the ommiſſion of any known duty, think with yourſelves, that ye have little or no love to Chriſt. Oh! there is among you great neglect of family worſhip, great neglect of ſecret prayer, great neglect of reading the ſcriptures, our confeſſion of faith, catechiſms, and covenants, great neglect of embodying yourſelves in ſocieties for mutual edification, for crying to the Lord for all the abominations in the earth, and for carrying on the teſtimony in our day. in our places and ſtations: All this argues a defect, if not a want, of love to Chriſt. But what ſhall I ſay, but what our Lord himſelf ſaid? *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

Sixthly, If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this, ye will hate and ſet yourſelves againſt all ſin: The pſalmiſt ſays, *I hate every falſe way.* And Paul ſays, Rom. vii. 15. *What I hate, that do I.* There he hated all ſin and when he committed ſin, in his failing, it was not with the full conſent of his will, or no ways with the conſent of his renewed part; for he ſays downward, verſe 17. *It was no more he that did*

did it, but ſin that dwelleth in him. Likewiſe, 1 John iii. 9. *Whoſoever is born of God, doth not commit ſin:* That is, not that the child of God is perfectly free from all ſin in this life, but when he ſinneth, he ſinneth not purpoſely, for he honeſtly reſolves againſt it; he ſinneth not willingly, for the whole conſent of his life goes not alongſt with it: He ſinneth not affectionately, for the renewed part of his affections is ſtated againſt it, and ſin is the object of his hatred; and he ſinneth not unto death, for the ſeed of God remaineth in him. And in a word, he is either kept from groſs ſins, or if, through unwatchfulneſs and temptation, he ſhall fall into any as David did, then he is ſorry for his fault, he is careful to recover himſelf, and not fall again; and as for ordinary eſcapes, and ſins of infirmity, his reſolution is againſt all theſe. Now, think upon this, ye who entertain any ſin, eſpecially any known ſin in your hearts: Think upon this, ye who continue in any known ſin in your walk, ye that keep your idols in your boſom, ye who are lying over in your drunkenneſs, uncleanneſs, cheating, or ſupplanting your neighbour, and going along with the known corruptions and abominations of the time, for I cannot ſee how ye bear this neceſſary and true love to Chriſt.

Seventhly, If ye have this true love to Chriſt, ye may know it by this, ye will take up the croſs of Chriſt, Matth. xvi. 24. Our Lord ſaith, *If any man will come after me, let him take up his croſs and follow me.* If ye have true love to Chriſt, ye will take up the croſs againſt the fleſh, the devil, and the world. Many folks thinks that the croſs of Chriſt is only to be taken up againſt the world, but theſe are ignorant of his croſs, for ye muſt croſs your own perverſe and corrupt inclinations, and all the temptations of the devil. But I ſhall not inſiſt upon this, it being hinted at upon the matter in ſome of the former evidences. Howbeit, if ye would evidence your love to Chriſt, ye muſt alſo take the croſs againſt the world; for this taking up of his croſs, is the great ſcope in the forecited place, as appears by the following verſe, where he ſays, *Whoſoever will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it, and whoſoever ſhall loſe his life, for my ſake, ſhall find it.* Moſes did bear this mark of love to Chriſt that I am ſpeaking of, for Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26. *He choſe rather to ſuffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon; he eſteemed the reproach of Chriſt greater riches, than all the treaſures of Egypt,* Now I would have you to think upon this, who will not take up the croſs of Chriſt, when it is laid to your doors. Ye ſhould not caſt yourſelves into needleſs calamities; ye ſhould not take ſufferings upon you, before they be laid upon you; but when ſuffering, and ſin are laid in the balance together, ſee then

then that ye make a right choice, and embrace the greateſt of ſuffering rather than the leaſt of ſin.

Many of you when the trial comes about for the kirk, put away the croſs from you, and refuſe to ſuffer upon that head, but will go and hear the curates; whereby ye yield obedience to the wicked laws of men, enjoining hearing as a ſign of your incorporating in that courſe, whereby ye receive the ordinance from thoſe who have no commiſſion from Chriſt, in his orderly and appointed way, to diſpenſe them, and ſo homologate their ſinful entry; whereby ye tranſgreſs the ſecond commandment, in yielding countenance and encouragement to a very corrupt worſhip; whereby ye ſtrengthen the courſe of perſecution that is on foot; whereby ye help in with popery into the land again; and whereby ye do condemn all the teſtimonies, ſuffering and blood-ſhed, that hath been in the land for non-conformity with that acurſed eraſtian dioceſian prelacy. O think upon this ye curate-hearers! and come out from amongſt them, as ye would not receive of their plagues, wherewith their way is threatned in the word of God.

Many of you, when a trial comes about for a bond, will put away the croſs, and refuſe ſuffering upon that head, and will ſubſcribe any bond that is tendered; and ſo ſome have taken the bond of regulation, which is an effect to renounce the work of reformation, and to bind to a corrupt and wicked courſe, contrived and carried on by the enemies of our bleſſed Lord. Some have taken bonds not to carry arms againſt the tyrant or any other under him, which, in effect is to caſt looſe the bond of our holy covenant, to condemn the on carrying of, and appearances for, our glorious work of reformation; and to ſay, that for you the enemies ſhall keep a peaceable poſſeſſion of Chriſt's houſe, and let them ſet up what wickedneſs, what idolatry, what Atheiſm they will, they ſhall not be oppoſed by you. And as for the bond of compearance, that is, to compear or anſwer at the enemies call; ſome think little of it: But, my friends, I would not have you look lightly upon it, for you cannot take it without the acknowledging the enemies unjuſt power and uſurpation; you cannot take it without having a hand in the puniſhment which they may unjuſtly inflict upon you.

Many of you, when a trial comes about for a ſinful oath, do put away the croſs, and refuſe ſuffering upon that head, and ſwear any oath that is impoſed; and ſo ſome have not ſtood to take the oath of the teſt; the ſinfulneſs whereof is ſo evident that I need not ſpeak of it. Some have taken the blaſphamous oath of ſupremacy; whereby our bleſſed Mediator is dethroned and degraded from his kingly office. Some have taken the oath of allegiance, which is contrary to our

covenants; which ſpecificates our allegiance to rulers only, in preſervation and defence of our covenanted religion, which juſtifies the uſurpation of the tyrants, and binds unto an unlimited allegiance unto them; and which, as it is ordinarily tendered, containeth many more ſins and abſurdities than that of mere allegiance; yea, ſay, it were an oath of lawful allegiance, if ſpecificated to a direct object, and ſo might be lawfully taken; yet now it cannot be ſo underſtood, for it muſt be looked upon with a reſpect to its preſent object, to wit, the uſurper and tyrant raging on the throne. And as for the oath of abjuration many of you have taken it, and look lightly upon it; through the maſk put upon it by the enemies and through the counſel and example of ſome miniſters and profeſſors, whom ye follow too far: But, my friends, I would have you to ſuſpect whatever comes from adverſaries hand, who are ſeeking no leſs than your conſciences, enjoyments, and lives; but if ye would look upon that oath in its own lineaments and features, ye may ſee a great ſinfulneſs in it; for by it ye ſwear to a lie; and caſt odious and unjuſt imputations upon the apologetic declaration, abjured thereby; which is ſo far from aſſerting (as the oath ſays of it) the lawfulneſs of killing all who ſerve their king in church, ſtate, army, or country, that it plainly holds forth the contrary; and taking it in its genuine ſenſe, it is ſo far from an extreme upon that head, that is cannot be confuted by reaſon, whatever ſome do by clamour: Ye will ſay, that ye only abjured murder; and what wrong could be there! I count them not Chriſtians, who either allow or practiſe murder; and the nature of the oath is a far other thing. That was but a pretence of the enemy to entangle you in the ſnare: And giving it had been as you ſay, yet it was a wrong to caſt ſuch an odious and unjuſt imputation upon the declaration, which the perſecutors branded with murdering principles. I would have you to remember that orthodox principle, *That every oath is to be taken in the common and plain meaning of the words, and the ſenſe of the impoſers!* otherwiſe ye do but cheat your own conſciences. Moreover, by that oath, ye did homologate the ſacrilegous encroachment of the tyrant, upon the ſupremacy of Chriſt; for it ſays, *They that ſerve their king in church, ſtate, army, or country.* Now theſe who ſay he is ſerved in the church, do not they ſay, that he is maſter and head of his church? Again, by that oath, ye renounce the found principle of a lawful and neceſſary defenſive war, and which is plainly declared in our covenant, againſt all theſe malignant enemies of godlineſs. Further, by that oath, ye involve yourſelves into a moſt poor ſlavery; for, according to the proclamation enjoining it, the beſt gentleman, and freeſt ſubject in the land,

land, was obliged to ſwear, before any petty ſoldier or dragoon, or officious or naughty perſon, that might challenge him upon the way, that his paſs granted upon the taking of that oath, was true and not forged; conſider this was contrary to our confeſſion of faith, and orthodox principles, allowing oaths only to be impoſed and received by lawful authority, and upon lawful, weighty, and neceſſary matters. O! conſider how deep that oath draws, when the enemy reckons it to deſerve a paſs, which they call a diſcrimating ſign between the good and the bad; that is, between the loyal, who are good in their account, and the conſcientious recuſants, who are bad in their account. O! I ſay, take it to the Lord, and ſeek a diſcovery of its iniquity. I have ſpoken the more of it, becauſe ye look ſo light upon it.

Finally, many of you, when a trial comes about, for the ſinful exactions and impoſitions of the time, ye do put away the croſs, and refuſe ſuffering upon that head, and pay any thing that is required of you; and ſo many have payed the wicked ceſs, expreſly and declaredly impoſed for maintainance of ruffians, to bear down the goſpel of Chriſt; whereby ye have become greatly acceſſory to the bringing the work of God thus low, and to the cruelty uſed to his people. Ye may as well buy ſwords, picks, muſkets, and put them in the hands of the ſoldiers and dragons, and bid them uſe them againſt God and his people, as pay that ceſs unto them.

Many have payed the curates ſtipends; which practice is contrary to the bond of our covenant, obliging us, in our places and ſtations, to the utmoſt of our power, to extirpate prelacy: and which practice tends to uphold it, as now obtruded upon the land. The zealous primative Chriſtians would have ſuffered, before they had contributed any thing to the building and upholding of the idol temple. And as for the locality, I would not have you look light upon it. O! conſider theſe to whom ye gave it, are ſtated, avowed, and declared enemies of Jeſus Chriſt, and it doth encourage and ſtrengthen them in their courſe of oppoſition to him; for they garriſon in what towns or country places they ſee moſt conducing to their purpoſe, in bearing down the work of the Lord; and where they hear his people to be moſt ſtirring and thriving-like, and then they ſeek in their locality from the adjacent corners; and ye who pay it unto them, do ſtrengthen them in that courſe and method. O ponder things deeply! and ſeek to be zealous and downright to God, and ye will ſcar at ſuch a thing. O! my friends, how ſad and lamentable is it, that ſo many profeſſors ſhould have ſo many ways ſhown their unwillingneſs to take up the pleaſant croſs of Chriſt! O! when it is laid to your doors, put it not away. I ſhall not ſay, but ſundry of the elect, and real

lovers of Chriſt, have gone on in ſome or other of theſe iniquities; but this argues either a defect in their knowlege, as being ignorant of the evil of theſe things, which in ſome, I can ſcarcely think, it being ſo often and plainly many ways held forth unto them, or elſe a defect in the exerciſe of their love to Chriſt in the time of their failing: But where there is always a ſhunning of the croſs of Chriſt, upon any head, I muſt be free to tell you, that it ſpeaks out no right and true love to Chriſt; but I would have you fixed in that old and ſound principle, which, ah! is now exploded by the profeſſion of ſome, and the practice of many of the worldly-wiſe of this generation, to wit, *That the greateſt ſuffering is to be embraced before the leaſt ſin.* Some folk will grant ſuch and ſuch a thing to be a ſin, but they will deny it to be a head of ſuffering. O, friends! whatever hath any ſin in it, I ſay unto you, that is a ſufficient head of all the ſuffering that can be laid upon you: And if ye ſhall ſay, can we quit our enjoyments, and ſcatter our families upon this head? I tell you, that way of arguing is ſo carnal, that I think it unworthy of my confutation: Howbeit, remember the words of our bleſſed Lord, *He that loveth father or mother, ſiſter or brother, houſe or lands, better than me, is not worthy of me.* Now, if ye cannot quit all theſe for him, when he calls you to it, your practice ſpeaks out your loving them better than him. O what ſcars you? What affrights you at the croſs of Chriſt? Take it up, and ye will find it eaſy; for, he will bear you and it both: Take it up, and ye will find it pleaſant; for the time of your greateſt ſufferings will be the time of your greateſt joy and contentment. The ſenſe of his favour, and a peaceable conſcience, will be the hundred fold, and a thouſand times told unto you. But I ſhall come to the uſe of the doctrine, and it is a threefold word of exhortation.

Firſt, Seeing it is the duty of people (as it is laid down in the doctrine) to ſet their love upon Chriſt, ye would try whether or not ye love him. I exhort you to examine yourſelves whether or not he hath gained your hearts and affections: If ye be amongſt the true members of Chriſt, ye may call him, as the bride doth here, *O thou whom my ſoul loveth!* O, my friends! go home and ſet ſome time apart, and reſt not till ye find out whether or not he is your beloved.

I have been giving you ſome marks and evidences whereby I would have you to examine yourſelves; if ye find theſe, ye may indeed conclude, that your love is ſet upon him; but if ye find them not, I would have you to ſuſpect it.

Secondly, Seeing it is the duty of people to ſet their love upon Chriſt, I would exhort you to it. O love him! love him! what ſay ye to it? will ye give him your hearts? I ſhall add a few motives to enforce this exhortation upon you. As,

1. Love

1. Love him, becauſe of his love-worthineſs. O! he and he only is worthy of love! Seek through heaven and earth, ye will not find ſuch a deſerving object beſide him. We may wonder that he ſeeks our love! We may wonder that he accepts of it. O! get but a ſight of him; and ye will ſee more of his lovelineſs, than any can tell you, than ye will be able to expreſs.

2. Love him becauſe of his love to us, 1 John iv. 19. *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* He loved us before we were; he loved us from eternity; he loved us with the ſtrongeſt and greateſt love; and he loved us altogether undeſerving it; yea, he loved us rather deſerving hatred than love; wrath, inſtead of mercy. O! may not this move you to love him!

3. Love him, becauſe of his ſuffering for us; he ſuffered want and diſtreſs for us; he ſuffered hunger and cold for us; he ſuffered contradictions of ſinners for us; he ſuffered cruel mockings and ſcourgings; he ſuffered in all his ſenſes and parts of his body; yea, he ſuffered the accurſed, painful, ſhameful, and lingering death of the croſs for us. O! what think ye of all his love, that ſhines in all his ſufferings? *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man ſhould lay down his life for his friends.* O love him! love him! every indignity done him for your ſakes, cries aloud to you to love him: The racking of his body on the croſs; the wounds of his ſide; the piercing of his hands and feet, cry aloud to you to love him: And above all, his bearing the full weight of his Father's wrath, upon his ſoul; yea, that meaſure of wrath, which might be proportionated to what was due to the elect through eternity, cries aloud to love him.

4. Love him, becauſe of the pardon of your ſin; ye will ſee, Luke vii. 47. *That a woman loved much, having her many ſins forgiven her.* There is no way to get your ſins pardoned, but through the price that he hath payed. Ye may think God is merciful, and therefore he will pardon you. But, it is preſumption to look for mercy, otherwiſe than through Chriſt.

5. Love him, becauſe of the excellency of the actions of love. O? love is an excellent thing, when it acts upon this excellent object. It is ſo with Paul, in his reckoning, 1 Cor. xiii. 13. When he ſpeaks of faith, hope, and charity; it is ſo indeed, for faith apprehends the promiſe; hope the thing promiſed; but ambitious love will have no leſs than the promiſer. Faith grips the garment of Chriſt; hope the feet of Chriſt; but love grips into the very heart of Chriſt. Faith and hope come to a cloſe; but love never ends; faith evaniſheth into ſight, hope into poſſeſſion; but love is the Chriſtian's continual companion throughout all eternity.

6. Love

6. Love him, and ye ſhall not want the manifeſtations of his love. His love terminating on us, draws out love after him; and our love terminating on him again, draws out more of the ſenſe of his love to us.

7. Love him, and ye ſhall not come ſhort of your enjoyment of him hereafter. It is true, faith is that, which, as an inſtrument, apprehends Chriſt, and ingrafts us in him, yet it worketh by love; and love accompanieth faith, as the ſun-beams do the ſun. O! what ſhall I ſay? Love him! love him! ye cannot beſtow your love ſo well; turn others to the door, and take in this beloved. Here I make offer of him unto you; here I preſent him unto you, *lift up your heads, O ye doors, that the king of glory may come in.* I preſent a glorious conqueror this night to be your gueſt. O! caſt you open the two foldings of the door of your hearts, to wit, The aſſent of the mind, and conſent of the will, that ye may receive him; caſt ye open the hearty conſent of faith and love, that he may take up his abode with you. O! what ſay ye to it? Friends, will ye cloſe with Chriſt? I obteſt you, by his own excellency; I obteſt you, by his love and ſufferings; I obteſt you, by the joys of heaven, and the torments of hell, that ye may cloſe with him. Ye thirty and forty year-old ſinners, will ye cloſe with him? Ye have rejected and deſpiſed many offers of the goſpel, and after all theſe ſlights and affronts he is as willing to be embraced by you this night, as when he firſt offered himſelf unto you. Ye young folks will ye cloſe with him; he would have a match made up with you: O! what ſhall I ſay? All of you come, whatever ye have been, or are; none of you ſhall be caſt out, *Whoſoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.*

Thirdly, Seeing it is the duty of people, to ſet their love upon Chriſt, I exhort you to give ſome teſtimonies of your love. Think ye that ye love him? Will ye then ſhow that? I would expoſtulate for ſome teſtimonies of your love. When Peter confeſſed that he loved Chriſt, in the 20th of John, our Lord deſires him to ſhew that by *feeding his lambs and ſheep*. It is true, ye cannot ſhew your love that way, for ye are not called to that office; but you ought to ſhew it the way that is competent for you in your ſtations. So, as I was ſaying before, I expoſtulate with you for ſome teſtimonies of your love: As,

1. Make a full and free reſignation of yourſelves and your all to Chriſt, that ye may ſay with the ſpouſe, Song vi. 3. *I am my beloved's*. O! ye ſhould not prigg with him about any thing. Some they prigg with him about their hearts, and will have a part thereof in their darling idols, which they cannot think to quit. Some they prigg with him about their time, and they will make religion but their by-work. If their worldly em-

employments be throng, they will neglect the worſhip of God in their families, and prayers in ſecret; others, if they keep any family-worſhip, it is in the evening, and ordinarily they are impatient and haſte to an end of it, and neglect it in the morning altogether. O! what a ſad prigging is this? Some they prigg with him about their relations, they will not quit theſe when he calls them to ſuffer for his ſake; but will tempt them, or will inſinuate upon them to comply, and deny his cauſe. Some they prigg with him about their poſſeſſions; and if yielding to this or that iniquity will keep their houſes or lands, they will not quit them. And ſome they will prigg with him about their lives, and if the ſwearing of a ſinful oath, the ſubſcribing to an iniquitous bond, or denying of his cauſe will ſave their lives, they will not loſe them. Oh! what ſad prigging is this? Oh! be aſhamed of it. Will ye lay all at his feet, and count it your honour and joy, that he diſpoſe of the ſame as he pleaſeth.

2. Give this teſtimony of your love to Chriſt, rejoice in him preſent, and keep his room empty when he is abſent; I ſay, rejoice in him preſent: I need not preſs you much to this; for, in his preſence there is great joy, though the enjoyment of him here be imperfect, yet it brings exceeding gladneſs with it: Therefore ſaith the pſalmiſt, Pſal. iv. 7. *Thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than when their wine and their corn increaſed!* But when he is abſent, ſee that ye keep his room empty for him; when he ſees it meet at any time for your correction, trial, and inſtruction, to withdraw himſelf, or hide his face, then idols or other lovers will readily preſent themſelves, and ſeek to poſſeſs his room: But be ye chaſte and true to your beloved, as the ſpouſe, Song iii. 2, 3, 4. who, in his abſence, could not reſt contented, but uſed all means and diligence until ſhe found him.

3. Give this teſtimony of your love to Chriſt, be ye filled with ſorrow and indignation, for the wrong done to the beloved. O! can ye look upon the horrid indignities and affronts done to him, by his declared and ſtated enemies, without grief and deteſtation? Can ye look upon the wrongs done him, by the backſlidings and defections of many miniſters and profeſſors, without grief and lamentation? If there were more mourning over their ſins, and leſs occaſion given for irritation and bitterneſs by us, we would be more in our duty, more ſucceſsful in our contendings, and more ready either to reclaim, ſuch as may be reclaimed, or leave a conviction upon them. Can ye look upon the wrongs done to him, by the deteſtable right hand extravagancies of ſome, who have run far out of courſe, without ſorrow and amazement? Yea, can you look upon the wrongs done to him by every one of yourſelves, in your own perſons, without grief,

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indignation, and aſtoniſhment? O! I ſay, give this teſtimony of your love, to be filled with ſorrow and indignation for every wrong done to him, whoever be the doers of it.

4. Give this teſtimony of your love to Chriſt, reſent the wrongs and affronts done to him as ye are able. How can ye hear his name any way evil ſpoken of, and not reſent it? How can ye let his enemies enjoy a peaceable poſſeſſion of his crown and regalities, without bearing teſtimony againſt it! Some both dead and alive have been aiming at the bearing a teſtimony againſt the ſame; and for that they have been the great butt of the adverſaries rage, and the object of the contempt and reproach of the generation: I ſay, how can ye let the enemy wear his princely robes without reſenting it! Did they not eſtabliſh the Mediator's head-ſhip of his own church upon the deceaſed tyrant? And though they declared it to be inherent to the crown of the realm, yet we know not what is become of it now, according to this man's principles, if he hath not transferred it unto the Pope; howbeit he will not be behind with his brother, for he hath invaded the kingdom of the moſt high God, and ſupreme governor of heaven and earth, by declaring and proclaiming himſelf to have an abſolute power and ſovereignty: Who can lay claim to this, but the great Majeſty of heaven and earth? For, what is it to be abſolute, I ſpeak of it in their ſenſe, but to be above all law, and have a power to do whatever his will and pleaſure is? And by virtue of this his arrogated abſoluteneſs, he takes to himſelf the making and anulling oaths at his pleaſure; the making, caſſing, and diſenabling laws at his pleaſure, and accordingly he hath reſcinded all our penal laws and ſtatutes againſt papiſts: Many of which ye will ſee mentioned in our national covenant: And by virtue of ſuch power, he hath taken to himſelf the diſpenſing of heretable rights at his pleaſure. Now, this is the man whom many will have you to own as king. O! my friends, if ye will own him, ye muſt do it as he proclaims himſelf, and as he requires owning of you; for he hath declared that he will not have his authority oppoſed to his perſon; ſo it is but a cheating of your conſciences to uſe any diſtinctions: Some ſays he is a king *de facto*; that is, in actual poſſeſſion of the throne, and therefore he is to be owned. But, I ſay, he is a tyrant *de facto*; therefore he is to be diſowned. He proclaims himſelf a tyrant, for he declared his power to be abſolute and uncontrolable, as we ſaid, and the exerciſe of his power is tyranny; and ye are not to look to *factum*, or the thing done, nakedly, and in itſelf only conſidered; but to the *jus* and *injuria facti*, the right or wrong that is done, according as it agrees or diſagrees with the rule of inſtitution; for conſcience is to be exerciſed about the thing as it right

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or wrong, as it is considered in its concordance with, or discrepance from the rule; and so accordingly it is to be owned or disowned: Now, if it be good to conclude that he is to be owned because he is King *de facto*; ye may also conclude that the Pope is to be owned because he is Pope *de facto*: Some, belike, will say, here, That the office of th Pope, is not instituted in the word of God, but that of the king is, therefore the consequence holds not. I answer, True indeed, the office of the pope is not instituted; for the pope in that office, whether more moderate or more rigid in the exercise of his tyranny, is the antichrist, and that beast spoken of in the Revelation: And though the office of magistrates be instituted in the word, and a great ordinance of God, to which we ought to yield subjection and obedience for conscience sake, yet that uncontrolableness of a monarch, more truly tyrant, hath as little vestage and footing in the word of God, as the office of the pope hath. I say this absoluteness he hath cloathed himself with, and is the fountain of all the exercise of his power; this is it which he proclaims to be his: Hence the question now put to prisoners is not, *Do you own the authority*, but, *Do ye own the prerogative?* Which is the very sense of the meaning of the adversaries old interrogation about the owning the authority: O! my friends, consider now what it is to own him, it is no less than to own this his arrogated and usurped prerogative of absoluteness: Consider what a horrid affront it is to the ordinance of magistracy, instituted by the great Lord and sovereign. How can ye own him, without homologating his wicked, disenabling, and annulling the penal laws and statutes made against papists, a great piece of your reformation, which do incapacitate him for any rule, and you for owning of him. I shall say no more of this, but lay aside your carnal interest and reasonings, and take the matter before the Lord, and home to your own consciences. Now, I must return again to expostulation with you, that ye would give this testimony of your love to Christ: Resent the wrongs that are done to him, as is competent to your stations and power: See that ye have your protestations standing in heaven against every indignity offered to the Father, and his blessed Christ. See that ye discredit and discountenance every course of wickedness or defection: See that ye oppose, by all lawful means to your capacity, the bloody ways of your persecutors. Ah! the practice of some speaks out, that they have little purpose to defend themselves, or resist the cruelty or rage of these murderers, for they have forborn to carry arms: Ye consider not that defensive arms is a part of our testimony; for we are accounted rebels, and persecuted to the death upon that head. Ye consider not

what a ſad ſurprize ye may meet with, which may make you find, to your great coſt, the ſkaith of ſuch a ſinful neglect.

5. Give this teſtimony of your love to Chriſt, ſtand with him though ye ſhould be left alone. Think not ſtrange that I think this of you, for firſt, Peter may be worthy to be withſtood to the face, Gal. ii. 11. and a Barnabas may be carried away with diſſimulation, ver. 13. And Paul may have them both to contend againſt, *for their walking not uprightly*, ver. 14. O! my friends, ſtand ye for truth, how few ſoever ſtand with you; be ye on God's ſide of all the controverſies of our day: It was this that made Enoch get that commendation, *That he walked with God.* Let ſubverters and perverters of truth have no place by ſubjection: No not for an hour, that the truth of the goſpel may continue with you, Gal. ii. 5. Many receive opinions, becauſe of learned mens owning of them; whoſe perſons they have in admiration; but ye would take every thing to the balance of the ſanctuary; ye ſhould take it to the law and to the teſtimony, and what ſpeaks according to theſe, receive it, whoever reject it; ye ſhould reſolve and ſtand to it, that whoſoever leave Chriſt, yet ye will not leave him.

6. Give this teſtimony of your love to Chriſt, ſtudy more to pleaſe him than all the world: He told you, That *whoſoever loveth father or mother better than him, is not worthy of him.* If paſtors, miniſters or fathers ſhall bid you do any thing which may diſpleaſe Chriſt, ſee that ye do it not; but tell them, that ye have a paſtor, father, and maſter above them, whom ye are to pleaſe in theſe matters. Be ye careful to perform the duties due to every one in their relations and places, according to the fifth commandment; but beware ye obey not man with diſobedience to God. Some huſbands, parents, or maſters will bid their wives, children, and ſervants go to kirk, and hear the curates, and chide with them, and threaten them to comply with other corruptions of the time; but, as I charge you not to withſtand theſe relations, but to obey the lawful commands of your ſuperiors, and to pleaſe them in things lawful and indifferent, ſo I charge you to diſobey them, when you cannot otherwiſe obey the commandments of God. I ſhall not longer inſiſt upon this doctrine, but proceed to another.

II. The ſecond thing in the words was, ye know, the petition, which the ſpouſe craves of Chriſt, ſet down in a twofold ſuit, to wit, *Tell me where thou feedeſt, and where thou makeſt thy flock to reſt at noon.* From thence.

Doct. I. *There is between Chriſt and his church, the relation of ſhepherd and flock.*

Therefore, ſays ſhe to him, *Tell me where thou feedeſt.* O is not this great condeſcenſion in Chriſt, to wit, thy flock, and

and where thou makeſt it to reſt at noon. Ye may ſee the proof of this, Iſa. xl. 11. *He ſhall ſtand and feed his flock like a ſhepherd.* O! is not this great condeſcenſion in Chriſt, that he ſtoops to any name, and bows to any relation which may be comfortable and profitable unto us. He is not aſhamed to call himſelf, and to be called by us, a ſhepherd; or to call us, and that we ſhould call ourſelves his flock.

Now, I ſhall take occaſion, from this doctrine, to ſhew you,

I. Wherein this relation appears in Chriſt.

II. Some of the duties that it binds on us.

I. As to the firſt, this relation appears in Chriſt,

Firſt, By feeding his people, Iſa. xl. 11. *he ſhall feed his flock like a ſhepherd.* He feeds them by the means of all his ordinances of his own inſtitution and appointment. He leads them unto his paſtures; O his paſtures are excellent paſtures! For,

1. They are wholeſome paſtures; ye will not be poiſoned or hurt in them: Theſe paſtures which may poiſonably infect you, ſhould not be reſorted unto; he leads you not unto thoſe; yea, he warns you to beware of ſuch a leaven: Therefore the doctrine of error is not his paſture.

2. His paſtures are fat and fattening, for they are green paſtures, Pſal xxiii. They that feed there, are, in compariſon of others, like Daniel, Hannaniah, Miſhael and Azariah, who were fairer and fatter in fleſh, than all the children which did eat the portion of the kings meat, Dan. i. 15. His paſtures are fat, for they are bleſſed of him; they are fat, for his flock hath a liberty in them, not a liberty to ſin, not a liberty to forſake them, but a liberty to uſe his ordinances fully and entirely; the liberty to feed in the length and breadth of his paſtures. Alas! it is no wonder that miniſters who take upon them the fetters and reſtrictions of adverſaries, and do not diſpenſe Chriſt's ordinances faithfully (as the indulged did, the moſt viſible fruit whereof we ſee to be loathſome and lukewarmneſs) and the people who reſort to them do but appear lean, becauſe they are upon a hard and bare teathering; whereas Chriſt allows them to feed at liberty. If any ſhall appear lean in Chriſts paſtures, it is not from the nature of his paſtures, but from their own ill humours and conſtitutions.

3. Chriſt's paſtures are ſecure; his flocks may lie down in them, as Pſal. xxiii. 2. Yea, they may feed and lie down in them, and none ſhall make them afraid; for the Lord will be a wall of fire about them, Zech. ii. 5. He will be a wall of fire, ſo that any who would aſſault them ſhall catch their own hurt. They ſhall be well guarded, for they ſhall have *threeſcore ten valiant men about them, of the valiant of Iſrael,*

all holding ſwords, being expert in war; every man having his ſword upon his thigh, becauſe of fear in the night, Song iii. 7, 8. That is, They ſhall be well guarded with angels, and with the goodneſs, the power, the juſtice, and all the attributes of God, who ſhall be a defence on all the glory, Iſa. iv. 5. But, it may be ſaid, How then comes it to paſs that enemies are ſuffered to make havock of his people? How comes it to paſs that the wolves and wild beaſts come in upon his paſture, and catch and kill his ſheep? That is not becauſe his paſture wants ſecurity, but becauſe the ſtrayings of his ſheep provoke him thereunto; that is not becauſe the guard is weak and inſufficient, but becauſe he ſeeth it needful for the glory of his name and good of his flock, to let the adverſaries provoke againſt them. O! my friends, ſtray not from his paſtures; keep cloſe by him; go on in your duty, for therein ſhall be your ſafety, which ſhall be performed, in ſo far as it is for your good; and what would ye have more? And if the Lord ſee it meet to caſt you into trouble, he will be with you through the fire and water of affliction, and keep you from ſkaith, Iſa. xliii. 2. If he ſee it not fit to hide you from the cruelty of man, he will hide you from fainting under their cruelty: Is not this enough: Is not this hiding ſufficient? Is not this ſafety abundance? But,

Secondly, This relation appears in Chriſt by governing his people, Micah vii. 14. *Feed thy people with thy rod.* He feeds them under the rod of his government; he governs them by his laws and diſcipline; he governs them by his officers of his own appointment; he governs them by powerfully determining them to follow his leading patiently: For he is given a *leader and commander to his people*, Iſa. lv. 4.

Thirdly, This relation appears in Chriſt, by gathering the ſtraying amongſt his people, Micah iv. 6. *I will gather her that is driven out.* Alas! there are ſundry of his elect ſtraying to day, yea, ſome of the converted going on in ſome or other of the corruptions of the time: O pray to him that they may be reclaimed! O cry to him that he would gather them again!

Fourthly, This relation appears in Chriſt, by ſaving the halting amongſt his people, Micah iv. 6. *In that day ſaith the Lord, will I aſſemble her that halteth.* Oh? there are ſome of his people halting, as to ſome points of their duty, and darkened and confuſed in ſome things, not knowing what to chooſe and what to refuſe. O pray that he may ſave them from halting! O pray that he may ſend out his light and truth to lead them!

There are ſome profeſſors ignorant, and there is hope of theſe, but there are ſome byaſſed, who are wedded and addicted to the corruptions of their way: and, alas! there is little

little hope of theſe; but *the Lord knoweth them that are his*, 2 Tim. ii. 19. O that he would aſſemble them from their halting! O ye that are his people! Why will ye halt? Why will ye not declare yourſelves fully on the Lord's ſide?

Fifthly, This relation appears in Chriſt, by carrying the young of his flock, Iſa. xl. 12. *He ſhall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his boſom. The ſmoaking flax will he not quench, the bruiſed reed he will not break.* Iſa. xliii. 3. He is a tender hearted ſhepherd, the young converts and weak of his flocks, he will deal gently with them. O! let none of you caſt a ſtumbling block in the way of his little ones, *For it were better for you that a milſtone were hanged about your neck, and ye caſt into the ſea, than that ye ſhould offend the leaſt of them.*

Sixthly, This relation appears in Chriſt, by his watching and ſtanding always in ready poſture for the feeding government and defence of his flock, Micah v 4. *He ſhall ſtand and feed in the ſtrength of the Lord, in the majeſty of the name of the Lord his God.* Feeding is not there taken in a paſſive, but in an active ſenſe, as in the text; for he feeds his people, and, as it were, ſtands ſtill over their heads. He is a careful ſhepherd, and he will not ſit down; He is a faithful ſhepherd, and he will not ly by from his office.

Seventhly, This relation appears in Chriſt, by his being accountable for every one of his flock; he is engaged to the father for them, and (to ſpeak ſo) he dare loſe none. He is ſo powerful, that he is well able to keep them; he loves them ſo well that he will not want them, John x 28. *And no man ſhall be able to pluck them out of his hand; of all that his father gave him he will loſe none.* And a man requires no more of his ſhepherd, but either that he will reſtore every one of his ſheep, elſe give ſkin and burn, as we uſe to ſay, of what is in-lacking, that it may be ſeen it is not devoured or loſt by his ſloth: But, oh! it is otherwiſe with this our great and powerful ſhepherd, he will preſent every one of his flock alive; he will preſent them ſafe and ſound; he will preſent them without ſpot or blemiſh.

II. The ſecond thing propoſed to be ſpoke unto, is ſome of the duties that this relation binds upon us; as,

Firſt, It binds this duty upon us, to hear Chriſt's voice, John x. 27. *My ſheep hear my voice.* If ye profeſs to be his ſheep, ye muſt hear his voice; ye muſt hear it with preparation; ye muſt have an impreſſion of his majeſty who ſpeaketh; ye muſt hear his ſent and faithful ambaſſadors, who ſpeak in his name, and by his warrant, not as men ſpeak to you, but as Chriſt ſpeaking by them. *Ye muſt lay apart all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, that ye may, with meekneſs, receive the ingrafted word, which is able to ſave your ſouls.*

ſouls. Ye muſt hear his voice with diligent attention. O! where are your minds? What are they upon? Many of you in time of preaching, have your thoughts and deſires chaſing vanities; ye muſt hear what he ſays to you in faith; ye muſt give a believing aſſent to all ſcripture hiſtory and prophecy: Ye muſt give an aſſent to the righteouſneſs of all ſcripture doctrine and precepts: Ye muſt give a believing aſſent to all ſcripture threatnings; and ye muſt make fiducial application of all ſcripture promiſes. Again ye muſt receive what he ſays to you in love. Many tho' they profeſs the truth yet they receive it not in love; and therefore they prove unconſtant and unſtedfaſt in their profeſſion. Many cannot hear their ſins freely and fully held out unto them but preſently they ſpurn and kick, like theſe who gniſhed upon Stephen with their teeth, when he was telling them their own and their fathers iil deeds. O! what ſhall I ſay, ye muſt hear his voice with obedience of practice. Ye muſt receive it with meekneſs and ſubjection of ſpirit; that ye may not only *be hearers, but doers of the word:* But, alas! many of you hear the offers of the goſpel but deſpiſe them; many of you have heard the duties of the day held forth unto you, and ye have not followed them; many of you have heard the ſins of your time, and the evil of your courſes ſhown unto you, but ye have not regarded: Oh! this makes us to cry out, *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

Secondly, This relation binds this duty upon us, not to hear the voice of ſtrangers. It is ſaid of Chriſt's ſheep, John x. 5. *A ſtranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of ſtrangers.* As ye are to take heed how ye hear, ſo ye are to take heed what ye hear, and whom ye hear: Ye are not to hear the inſtruction that cauſeth to err from the words of knowledge: Ye are not to hear ſtrangers who have not commiſſion from Chriſt to ſpeak to you; or who pretend a commiſſion, but have it not in his appointed way; *they are thieves and robbers, that enter not in by the door, but climb up ſome other way;* neither are ye to hear theſe who pervert, corrupt, and forefault the commiſſion of Chriſt. Alas! there is little conſcience of this amongſt profeſſors: They think any man is good enough to hear, if he be not a curate, or a hearer of them. O friends! I would have you more ambitious of the character and duty of Chriſt's ſheep.

Thirdly, This relation binds the duty of harmleſneſs upon us. Sheep are not ravenous or devouring, but innocent and harmleſs creatures. This duty may be gathered from, Zeph. ii. 3. *Seek righteouſneſs, ſeek meekneſs.* If ye would not wrong or harm any, ye muſt give every one their due; ye muſt omit no duty that ye owe unto them. Ye muſt give God his due; ye muſt love him with all your heart, mind, and ſtrength; and ſeek his glory in all things. Ye muſt give his people their due;

due; ye muſt love them becauſe of his image which they bear; ye muſt carry their caſe before the throne of grace; ye muſt concur with them in the neceſſary duties; ye muſt ſympathize with them in their afflictions, and communicate to their neceſſities, Ye muſt give the enemies of God their due; ye muſt love their perſons; ye muſt pray for the ſouls of all who are reconciliable to God: Ye muſt hate their cauſe and their way; ye muſt not pay ceſs and locality to them which ſome plead as due; but by prayers, lawful war, and other lawful means, ſeek their overthrow. Ye muſt give relations their due; ye muſt honour them, love them; obey the lawful commands of thoſe to whom ye are ſubject. Ye muſt give yourſelves your own due; ye muſt ſeek your own ſalvation; ye muſt not caſt yourſelves into any needleſs calamity, but ſeek a lawful and cleanly eſcaping out of it: Ye muſt do to yourſelves what God alloweth, and nature requireth. Furthermore, if ye would not wrong or harm any, ye muſt caſt no ſtumbling-block in their way. Alas! the carnality of many profeſſors, their unwatchfulneſs, their unſtedfaſtneſs, their defections, their untenderneſs, their bitterneſs againſt the perſons of men, do great harm, and ſtumble many.

Fourthly, This relation binds the duty of fruitfulneſs upon us. Sheep are uſeful creatures, they give meat, drink, and cloathing to a people. O! Chriſt's ſheep ſhould ſtudy to be fruitful: Therefore are they called, *The branches which muſt bear fruit, elſe they ſhall be taken away*, John xv. 2. do ye profeſs to be Chriſt's ſheep? ye muſt bring forth fruit; not fruit into yourſelves; ye muſt not ſeek your own things; ye muſt not make your own uſe of your talents and enjoyments, for that will prove you to be but empty, Hoſ. x. 1. But ye muſt bring forth fruit unto God. Ye muſt ſeek the honour of his name the advancement of his kingdom, the edification of your own and others ſouls.

Fifthly, In a word this relation binds upon you the duty of ſubjection unto Chriſt: He calls his people his ſheep, becauſe of their towardneſs and cleanneſs: He calls the wicked the goats becauſe of their filthineſs and unruline ſs.

Now, I come to a word of uſe from the doctrine.

And firſt a twofold word of exhortation.

1. Give up yourſelves unto Chriſt as his ſheep, and take him for your ſhepherd. O! I ſay take him for your ſhepherd; ſatisfy not yourſelves, till ye can ſay with the pſalmiſt, *The Lord is my ſhepherd*; and then ye may boldly apply to yourſelves all that David lays claim unto through the reſt of that pſalm: Ye may be confident, that ye ſhall not want any thing that will be good for you; he will do all for you, that ſuch a relation engages him unto.

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2. I exhort you, from this doctrine, to carry as his ſheep; he will not fail in the part of a ſhepherd unto you, ſee that ye do not fail in the duty of ſheep unto him. Do ye profeſs to be his ſheep? O ſee that ye carry with that cleanlineſs, harmleſneſs, and fruitfulneſs that becomes ſuch a profeſſion!

A ſecond uſe is of conſolation. O ye flock of Chriſt! be ye comforted from that relation that Chriſt ſtands in unto you, when under-ſhepherds will not do their duty. Alas! many paſtors have deſiſted from their charge, and left off to feed you: And ſome, if ye will follow them, will lead you aſide from ſome points of truth, and pieces of duty: In this dark and ſad caſe have your recourſe unto Chriſt; and under all ſuch diſcouragements, comfort yourſelves with this, that he is your ſhepherd, and will not fail to act the part of that relation. He will feed you, govern you, gather you, ſave you, watch over you, and be countable for every one of you.

DOCT. II. *When the flock of Chriſt knows not what to do to avoid ſin and ſuffering: he, in both theſe caſes will direct.*

The ſpouſe was confident of this, when, as in the text, that ſhe might avoid ſin, ſhe ſeeks to know where he feeds his flock; and that ſhe might avoid ſuffering, ſeeks to know where he makes them to reſt at noon; likewiſe Iſa. lv. 4. *He is given for a leader and commander to people.*

This doctrine hath two branches;

I. The firſt is touching Chriſt directing and leading his flock, that they may avoid ſin. The

II. Is his leading them that they may avoid ſuffering.

I. As to the firſt we will enquire,

Firſt, Whereby doth he lead his people ſo as to avoid ſin.

Secondly, How he doth it.

For the firſt, he doth it by his word and ſpirit, Iſa. lix. 21. *My ſpirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeeds ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* Some profeſs to take the word, but they neglect and miſregard the ſpirit; but theſe are carnal and formal. Some pretend the ſpirit; without, beſide, and oftentimes contrary to the word; as the abominable Quakers, and theſe are enthuſiaſtick. But, my friends, I would have you to ſeek, and take the ſpirit and the word together, according as he hath promiſed unto you in the forceited place. The word of God, without his ſpirit, cannot effectually teach you his will for your ſalvation: And his ſpirit, without his word will not do it.

The ſecond thing we will enquire into, is, how he leads his people ſo as to avoid ſin? And he doth this;

1. By diſcovering ſin and duty unto them. His word holds out duty with commands, and exhortations; his word holds

out

out both the one and other; his promiſes to ſuch as follow it, and it holds out ſin with ſevere prohibitions and terrible threatnings, if it ſhall not be eſchewed.

2. He doth this by enlightning their minds, ſo that they ſee an exceeding ſinfulneſs in ſin, and lovelineſs in their duty. The word, indeed, doth literally enlighten folk, but this is ſpiritual enlightning which I am ſpeaking of. The word holds plainly and fully out to man what ſin is; and the exceeding ſinfulneſs of it; but without this enlightning of the ſpirit, man is dark, and hath little diſcerning of it. It is true, a man that hath not the ſpirit of God, may, from the word, tell you that murder is a ſin, uncleanneſs is a ſin, and prelacy is a ſin, *&c.* but he ſees little of what he ſays: Therefore doth the pſalmiſt pray, *Open mine eyes, that I may behold the wonderful things out of thy law.*

3. He doth this by ſtrengthning and powerfully determining of his people to follow his direction: For, as he is given a leader to his people, ſo he is alſo a commander to make them follow his leading: he doth not force them or compel them, but kindly and powerfully gains them to his will and way, making them willing who are unwilling, Pſal. cx. 3. *Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power.*

II. The ſecond branch of the doctrine, is touching Chriſt's leading his flock, that they may avoid ſuffering: He doth indeed lead them in under the wings of his love and merit, which doth cover them from ſuffering under the juſtice of the Father, and from bearing his wrath. But this, not being the preſent ſcope, I ſhall not ſtay upon it. But we would enquire how he doth lead them ſo as to avoid the perſecution of adverſaries. And,

Firſt, He doth it by hiding them from it; *A man ſhall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt. He is a ſhadow from the heat, when the blaſt of the terrible one is as a ſtorm againſt the wall*, Iſa. xxxii. 2. and 25. 4. He hides every one of his purſued people ſo long as he hath any thing to do with them, and ſo long as he ſees it for their good and he will always hide ſome of them, by ſome providence or other in ſome place or other, *for ye ſhall not have gone over all the cities of Iſrael, until the ſon of man be come*, Mat. x. 23.

Secondly, He doth it by preſerving his people from fainting under the perſecution of enemies: This way is he *a refuge from the ſtorm and a ſhadow from the heat when the blaſt of the terrible one is as a ſtorm againſt the wall.* Let enemies lay upon the head of his people what they will, he upholds them under it; he ſtands between them and the weight and force of it: *For, when they paſs through the water, he is with them; and thro' the rivers they ſhall not overflow them: When they walk through the fire they ſhall not be burnt; neither ſhall the flame kin-*

dle upon them, Isa xliii. 2. O! this is safety enough.

Thirdly, He doth it by letting out much of the consolation and joy of his spirit to his people under their sufferings, 1 Pet. iv. 14. *If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you.* O my friends; fear not persecution; fear not the being cast out of your houses; fear not imprisonment; fear not banishment; fear not a scaffold; fear not a fire, for Christ can make these times most sweat and easy unto you: Yea, and he hath dealt ordinarily so with his martyrs in former ages, and even in our days, who would not have changed their scaffold for a throne. *O get ye into your chambers, and shut your doors about you, and hide yourselves as it were for a small moment, until the indignation be overpast*, Psal. xxvi. 20.

Now, a word of use for instruction and information.

First, to let you see the danger of straying from Christ. The spouse saw this, when she sought of Christ where he did feed his flock. O! see the danger of every corrupt and straying course. Many think little to step aside, that is, because they see not the evil and danger of it.

Secondly, To let you see that suffering is the ordinary lot of the flock of Christ. The spouse in the text looks for a noon-tide, and scorching time of persecution; and Acts xiv. 22. we are told, *That we must thro' much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God;* and 2 Tim iii. 12. *That all who will live godly, in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution;* yea, our own experience may fully inform you of this.

Thirdly, To let you know that Christ can help you in both cases. Are ye ready to be drawn away with sin? He can help you and prevent it. Are ye ready to be objected to the heat of persecution? he hath cool-refreshings, and can lead you thither.

A second word of use, is of exhortation. O make use of Christ for leading and shelter. Are ye afraid of sins? Make use of him for discovering it unto you, for strengthning you, and powerfully determining you against it, Are ye afraid of suffering? make use of him for hiding you from it, or preserving you from fainting; and letting out unto you much of the joy and consolation of his spirit under it.

III. A third thing in the words, ye know, was the reason or argument whereby the spouse enforceth her petition; for why, says she, *should I be as one that turns aside after the flocks of thy companions?* Many doctrines might be drawn from this; but I shall only lay down this general and comprehensive one.

Doct. *As Christ hath many companions, who may lead away people in greater or lesser measure from him; so believers care should be, not to turn aside after them, but to carry a holy indignation against such an evil.*

This

This is all clear from the text; for the bride here supposeth that Christ hath companions, and that they have flocks following them; and her saying, *Why should I be as one that turns aside after them?* shews her averseness from her iniquity.

In the opening up of the words, I was shewing you what was to be understood by companions, *viz.* Every thing that is set up beside Christ, or esteemed above him, as lust and idols. (but I shall not go out here upon these, having already insisted upon that doctrine, about setting your love upon Christ) Also every one that leads people away from Christ as hereticks; and, in general, all who lead people from their integrity, into any course of error or defection from Christ, who are in so far his companions. But, in speaking a little to the doctrine I shall endeavour to show you,

I. Some companions that Christ hath in the land, of whom we would beware, and after whom ye would not turn aside.

II. I shall shew you, somewhat of the necessity of standing at a due distance from their flocks.

III. some helps to avoid the evil of their way. And so I shall close.

I. As to the first, *viz.* These companions, they are indeed of vastly different sorts and sizes; and seeing the bride's reason here doth comprehend all, whom to follow, were to turn aside:

I must not only speak a word of gross heresy, and departing from the fundamentals of salvation, and of the detestable backsliding, as it occurs to this purpose, which hath been carried on in the land now for many years, by wicked and cruel laws: But also, of the defection of others; some of whom otherwise I love, reverence, and esteem, as great and godly. And,

First, These must be reckoned Christ's companions, who lead people into a total abnegation or denial of the offices of Christ. These are gross hereticks indeed, and such are Papists. They lead people into the abnegation of the prophetical office of Christ, whereby he teacheth by his word and Spirit; for, they prefer and obtrude their own traditions above the word of God; they deny the use of his word to the laity, or these that have no office in their antichristian, ecclesiastic tyranny; holding that ignorance is the mother of devotion: They place an infallibility in their church; some in the Pope alone, whom they will have to be an unerring prophet; some in the pope together with a general council: But, however they may differ about the subject of this infallibility, they generally all hold it to be in their whorish church. They lead people unto the abnegation of the priestly office of Christ; for, they obtrude upon them the doctrine of self righteousness.

teouſneſs, and meriting by their own works, and ſo they plainly ſay, That the ſacrifice of himſelf, which Chriſt once offered for the ſatisfaction of divine juſtice, and our reconciliation to God, was in vain. But I need to uſe no other argument to confute their doctrine of merit, but to ſhew you what is required in a work before it can be meritorious. As,

1. This is required in it, that it be a work merely of the creatures own working: But no good work, or action of a creature can be ſaid to be of their own working, becauſe it is the Lord alone that worketh in them, both to will and to do.

2. This is required in it, That it be a work which the worker oweth not, and is under no obligation to do; whereas let a Chriſtian do all the good he can, he is infinitely ſhort of what is due: Let him do his utmoſt, he is but an unprofitable ſervant, as our Lord hath taught us. I may uſe a homely compariſon, There is a debtor, and he oweth to his creditor a great ſum of money, and he hath nothing to pay with, but his creditor pitieth, and giveth him ſome pounds or talents to trade withal. Now, what think ye, doth the poor debtor merit any thing at the creditor's hand, who bringeth an inconſiderable gain to him, of his own money, after he was turned bankrupt?

3. This required in it, That there be a proportion between the work and the reward. Now, what proportion can there be, think ye, between any thing ye can do, and eternal happineſs? Yea, inſtead of meriting eternal ſalvation by any good, that is in a good work, there is ſo much evil in the beſt of men's works, as would deſerve eternal damnation, if God ſhould enter into judgment with them. Now, what think ye of the doctrine of merit? Ye may read the epiſtle to the Romans, and there ye will ſee the conceit of it fully and clearly confuted. I know ye will all profeſs to be even down againſt this hereſy. But, ah! many of you are papiſts in your practice; even as many of you as go about to eſtabliſh your own righteouſneſs, by reſting on your own performances and attainments.

But, morever, they lead people unto an abnegation or denial of the prieſtly office of Chriſt, by ſetting up other interceſſors or mediators beſide him, as angels or ſaints. They ſay, that as we cannot have immediate acceſs unto an earthly king without his courtiers, ſo we are to judge the like in our approaches to God. But, it is bad arguing from the cuſtoms of the courts of men, to the way of our acceſs unto the court of heaven: This is their carnality and ignorance; importunity is readily counted impertinency with men, but it is well pleaſing unto God. Let them pretend what humility or reverence they will, for this their idolatry, their way is condemned,

demned, and their practice refuted by the Holy Ghost, Col. ii. 18. *Let no man beguile you in your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels; intruding into these things which he hath not seen, vainly puft up by his fleshly mind.* We see, Rev. xix. 10. and xxii. 8. when John, through that mistake, fell down at the feet of an angel to worship him, that he peremptorily forbade John, saying, *See thou do it not.* And, Acts x 25, 26. When Cornelius met Peter, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him, Peter refused, and said, *Stand up, I myself also am a man.* Our Lord shews us, Matth. iv. 10. That *thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* It is our comfort that our Mediator, Christ Jesus, knows all our cases and necessities, and that he can sufficiently help them. He is both our advocate and judge; and we need not fear that our cause shall miscarry with him: And to employ any other intercessors were to give them that worship and glory which is only due unto God, and to derogate greatly from the priestly office of Christ.

These blasphemous papists lead people unto an abnegation of the kingly office of Christ; for they set up the pope, whose name is blasphemy, as head of the church: They reject the doctrine of Christ, and obtrude their own antichristian and heretical traditions: They reject Christ's institution of his sacraments, turning his baptism unto the vilest superstition, and his supper into the grossest of idolatry, obtruding for it their mass; and asserting the bread and wine to be really transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ; and adding unto these five others of their own carnal and accursed invention. They reject the worship of Christ, and obtrude their own idolatries, superstitions, and insignificant teaching human ceremonies. They reject the discipline of Christ, and obtrude their own popish penances, and blasphemous pardons. They reject the government of Christ, and obtrude their own tyrannical hierarchy, with a monstrous number of antichristian orders. O! my friends, consider their damnable way, and what a height they are come unto in the land. Popery hath got up into the throne, and into many places of power and trust. And ye must resolve either to yield unto their keys, or be pursued by their sword. Some folk were saying, that through this course of revolt from the Lord, they could never see a head of suffering; but, if it were come to popery, they would stand then. O! remember, *He that is faithful in little, will also be faithful in much; and he that is unfaithful in little, will not be faithful in much.* I shall not say, but many that have conformed with prelacy, may suffer ere they embrace popery; but I would have carnal professors, who have been convinced of the evil of prelacy, and yet not thought

thought it to have been a head of ſuffering, to be afraid to think, how far they may be juſtly left of God. Many of you are expecting peace, and gapeing after a liberty. O! infatuated fools! what do ye expect from men, who know not what it is to keep either to God or man? What can ye expect from men, whoſe principles lead them neither to give faith to, nor keep faith with proteſtants, whom they call hereticks. It may be obſerved through the paſſages of their cruelties and treacheries, that they have had the moſt bloody deſigns, when they have given forth liberties, and publiſhed proclamations, promiſes, and proteſtations of favour: I may inſtance for this, the bloody and never-to-be-forgotten maſſacre of Paris, which was carried on in this wiſe.

The popiſh French king, that he might enſnare and deſtroy the proteſtants, would needs give his ſiſter in marriage to the king of Navarre, a good and proteſtant prince; making open profeſſion and proteſtation that he did, not ſo much give her unto the king, as to the whole proteſtation church, and that it might be a mean of conciliating an inviolable peace between him and proteſtants: And the French admiral, Coligne, who had greatly maintained the civil war in France, for the proteſtant intereſt, was invited to the marriage, and allowed to bring with him fifty well armed gentlemen for his guard; and kindly welcomed by the French king, who called him father, and gave him an hundred thouſand Frenchmen, for the reparation of that loſs he had ſuſtained by that war; and in the mean time, by the allowance and inſtigation of the French king and queen, the duke of Guiſe aſſaults the admiral's chamber in the night, and murders him; And then he, and the duke of Anjou, together with threeſcore thouſand papiſts, well armed within the city, at the ringing of the royal-bell, killed and maſſacred the proteſtants, noblemen, gentlemen, miniſters, and commons of all ſorts, without any reſpect to quality, age, or ſex; ſo that in the ſpace of one night, and two days, there were ten thouſand cruelly murdered: All the king of Navarre his attendents were killed in this fatal butchery; only himſelf and the prince of Conde ſpared, who were threatned either to embrace popery, or loſe their lives, who, notwithſtanding, remained ſtedfaſt in their religion. I may give you a more recent inſtance than this; and that is of the Piedmonders, the reliques of the old Waldenſes, who this laſt year, being forced to defend themſelves by war againſt ſome Savoyan and French forces, did wonderfully proſper and ſucceed, which the enemy perceiving, did offer peace unto them, and liberty to enjoy their religion and poſſeſſions, if they would lay down their arms; which condition, alas! they preſently embraced, except a very few; ſo, their arms being laid down, the treacherous and

cruel

ernel enemy preſently aſſaulted them, ſtripping them naked and dragging them into priſons, where many thouſands were killed with hunger and cold, and they brought almoſt to nought.

Other inſtances I could give you, but time will not allow. O! my friends, ye may ſee how bad it is to truſt enemies. I have obſerved through ſeveral paſſages of hiſtory, that the greateſt calamity hath come upon the church, when the enemies pretended and profeſſed that they ſhould have peace and liberty: And greateſt ſkaith hath come to church by truſting them; therefore, ye would mind our Lord's warning us to beware of men. O! will ye come to this, friends, not to truſt enemies? When they profeſſed to be friends to us, and did ſwear to maintain the religion which we own this day, how did they treacherouſly break the covenant? and from that day, have perſecuted us for continuing in the oath of God, which they themſelves are obliged to as well as we. And will ye now truſt them when they profeſs to be adverſaries? When they profeſſed friendſhip they did not give us peace, and I count it a mark of a ſpirit plagued of God, to expect it from them now. No, no: It will be better for you, to be prepare for a bloody winding-ſheet; for the Lord hath a controverſy with the inhabitants of this land, and he will bring a ſword upon them, which ſhall lay cities and country-ſides waſte and deſolate.

Secondly, Theſe muſt be reckoned Chriſt's companions, who lead people unto the abnegation of any one office of Chriſt, as the prelatick party, who lead people unto the denial of his kingly office. He is alone king over his own church, Pſal. ii. 6. *I have ſet my king upon my holy hill of Zion.* And, Eph. i. 22. *All things are under his feet; and he is given to be head over all things to the church.* And accordingly he hath given ordinances to his church, and ſet officers in her, Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 28, But this wicked prelatick party puts him down from his royal throne, and introduces into his church officers that he never appointed; they bring in arch-biſhops, biſhops, deans, *etc.* which are among the orders of antichriſt; they deny the divine warrant of a ruling elder in the church, and lay him aſide from judicatories; they throw all power of government out of the hand of the poor curates, and put that over upon their proud biſhops; and they again muſt be countable to the civil power whoſe creatures they are; and inſtead of receiving and obſerving the full preſcriptions which Chriſt hath given for regulating his miniſtry, they receive and obſerve the orders of parliament and council: And ſo this is not only a dioceſian, but alſo an eraſtian prelacy. O! what ſhall I ſay! look to them in their entry, and there ye will ſee them robbers and thieves:

thieves: Look to them in their doctrine, and there you will ſee them hugely erroneous: Look to them in their worſhip, and there you will ſee them greatly ſuperſtitious: Look to them in their government, and there you will ſee them anti-chriſtian: Look to them in their walk and there you will ſee them for the moſt part profane: Look to the cauſe they propogate, and ye will ſee that to be black perjury, groſs darkneſs, overſpreading profanity, and rebellion againſt God. Wherefore, I ſay, as ye would not incur the wrath of GOD, go not along with the flocks of theſe companions, but come out from their kirks: And ſeeing they will go on in an accurſed way let them go alone, we cannot help it; but go not ye along with them.

Thirdly, The ſpouſe having her eye upon every one who might lead her unto any courſe of error or defection, whoever they were as to their perſons and ſtate; therefore, I muſt here reckon in this third place, theſe to be, in ſo far, companions of Chriſt, in reſpect of their courſe, who lead people to own what the word of God, and their national church, doth condemn; Ezek. xiii. 10. *They have ſeduced my people; and one built up a wall, and another daubed it with untempered mortar*, Such are theſe miniſters, who counſel or teach the lawfulneſs, or toleration of hearing curates, theſe ſtrangers whom Chriſt's ſheep ſhould not follow, John x. 5. and which is condemned by our covenants and acts of aſſemblies; or who counſel or teach the lawfulneſs, or toleration, of paying the ceſſes, and other exactions to the enemies, which is a ſeeking their peace and proſperity, forbidden, Deut xxxiii. 6. And which is a ſtrengthning of the hands to the wicked, that he return not from his wicked way, which is challenged Ezek. xiii. 22. and which is condemned by the act of our aſſembly, for cenſuring compliers with the enemies of this church and kingdom; or, who counſel or teach the lawfulneſs, or toleration, of ſwearing ſinful oaths, and ſubſcribing the iniquitous bonds of the time; contrary to the word of God, Deut. vii. 2. *Thou ſhalt make no covenant with them*; and Jer. iv. 2. *Thou ſhalt ſwear the Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteouſneſs*. And contrary to that act of our aſſembly, diſcharging the members of this church, the embracing of all new oaths and bonds in the common cauſe, impoſed without the conſent of this church, as they would not incur the wrath of God, and the cenſure of the kirk. Now theſe be who they will, ye would not follow for they will lead you from your integrity; *Their inſtruction will cauſe you to err from the words of knowledge*, Prov. xix. 27.

Fourthly, I muſt reckon theſe to be in ſo far Chriſt's companions, in reſpect of their courſe, who lead people to condemn what they are bound to own by the word of God, and by

by the conſtitutions, and attained-to reformation of their own church: This is not to *hold faſt that we have already received*, Rev. v. 25. *Nor to walk by the ſame rule, and mind the ſame thing, whereto we have already attained*, Phil iii. 16. Such are theſe miniſters, who counſel or teach people to relinquiſh any of the truths which we are bound to contend or ſuffer for, by the objective tie of the word of God, and the ſubjective tie of our holy covenants; who do condemn the heads of our martyrs ſufferings: And, who do preſs a relinquiſhing and diſcountenancing of theſe, who, in their places and ſtations, are helped more faithfully to carry on the teſtimony to the reformation: For, as different ages and diſtinct churches have different and diſtinct words of teſtimony, ſo whatever truths ye are called either to deny, or to ſuffer, be faithful in them, and count none of them ſmall: It was this for which the church of Pergamus was commended, Rev. ii. 13. *I know thy works, and where thou dwelleſt, even where Satan's ſeat is; and thou holdeſt faſt my name, and haſt not denied my truths, even in thoſe days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was ſlain among you, where Satan dwelleth.* For this alſo was the church of Philadelphia commended, Rev iii. 8. *Thou haſt a little ſtrength and haſt kept my word, and haſt not denied my name:* And it is added, verſe 10. *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I will alſo keep thee from the hour of temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them which are upon the earth.* Now theſe miniſters ye are to beware of, and not to follow; they will lead you from your integrity, their inſtruction alſo cauſeth you err. In theſe things they bring not the doctrine of the preſent word of Chriſt's patience; and therefore ye are not to receive them, and bid them God ſpeed, in that work of their counſelling and teaching, 2 John ver. 10, 11.

Fifthly, There are ſome who may be called indirect or interpretative companions of Chriſt, in reſpect of their courſe: Theſe are they who do not lead people themſelves into error or defection; but lay them open, or leave them to be led aſide by others. As,

1. They who do not give them warning of the palpable ſins and ſnares of the time; when as a great part of their charge is to keep people right in dangerous times, Eph. iv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. They are commanded, *To cry aloud and not to ſpare, and to lift their voice like a trumpet, and ſhew people their tranſgreſſions, and the houſe of Jacob their ſins*, Iſa. lviii. 1. Paul had another teſtimony of their conſcience than they can have, when he ſays, Acts xx. 20. *I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you;* and ver. 26, 27. *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men: for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.*

Now, ſuch are theſe miniſters who have not warned people of the ſin of prelacy, indulgence, ſinful oaths, and bonds, ceſs, and other ſinful exactions: All which have been particularly witneſſed againſt, by ſo many faithful ambaſſadors of Chriſt within this land; but theſe being ſo unfaithful for their commiſſion, and highly cenſurable by an act of aſſembly, for ambiguous ſpeaking, and not making particular application to the ſins of the time, and for defrauding of ſouls, as being pleaſers of men, rather than ſervants of Chriſt, I cannot ſee how ye can, with a ſafe conſcience, follow them; ſad experience lets us ſee the bad conſequents of countenancing ſuch; for, thereby people become once indifferent as to the public ſins, and then give up contending againſt them. And,

4. They may be called indirect and interpretative companions of Chriſt, in reſpect of their courſe, who leave the public work, and deſiſt from the exerciſe, of their office. Paul durſt not have done ſo, for he ſaith, 1 Corin. ix. 16. *Though I preach the goſpel, I have nothing to glory of, for neceſſity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the goſpel.* This is the practice of a hireling, John x. 12. He that is a hireling, and not the ſhepherd, ſeeth the wolf coming, and leaveth his ſheep and fleeth. And though ſome have not altogether forborne preaching, yet the way of their going about it, hath been as the *putting a candle under a buſhel*, Matth. v. 15. Alas! how little warning hath the land got of the current of the times, corruptions, theſe ſundry years by-paſt, when compliance therewith was moſt preſſed, and yielded unto? I cannot but teſtify againſt this, conſidering what the Lord ſaith to Ezekiel, chap. xxxiv. 2. *Son of man, propheſy againſt the ſhepherds of Iſrael: Should not the ſhepherds feed the flocks?* O that they would conſider what is ſaid, Ezek. xxxiii. 2. Now, conſider how unfaithful theſe are in their commiſſion; and that they come under the laſh of that cenſure appointed by the Lord for diſorderly walkers 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. which diſorderly walking was their not working, ver. 11. From theſe we are commanded to withdraw, as ver 6. For it is a great diſorder not to work the work of the Lord. The greater the work of a man's calling be, the greater is his ſcandal in not working it. I cannot ſee how ye can countenance them, who are thus chargeable, though they ſhould now preach unto you, until they duly reſent their ſinful, ſhameful, and offenſive neglect. Miniſters ſhould not carry, as if eventual providence gave them their commiſſion, and preach only in times of leaſt hazard; for, it is given them in commiſſion, to be *inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. There are ſome appearing more in the public work than formerly; and I wiſh it be with no eye to this expected liberty I know many of you will ſay, they no-

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tice it not, and they come not under the covert and colour of it. I wish it may be so; and I shall tell you how I think it may be known.

(1.) If they have a conscional testimony against it; and in their preaching, warn people what may be the enemies bad designs in it, and the sin of any who embrace and accept it.

(2.) If they give a practical testimony against it; that is if they in their practice observe none of the limitations wherewith that law may be restricted.

Hence I cannot see how the proclamation that did tolerate fire-side preachings, and discharge preaching in out-houses and fields, can be testified for by these ministers, who preach ordinarily and habitually in fire houses, yea, let me tell you, that field preachings is a greater testimony than is well-considered; for being discharged by the enemies of our Lord's crown, it becomes to us a case of confession. They count it rebellion, we should testify that we hold it is no rebellion; for it is a worshipping and serving of the Lord in that way; which in the present circumstances, is most for the advancement of his kingdom; as is manifest, by far more having access, than otherwise, unto the gospel; yea, it is a practical asserting of this principle, *That God is to be worshipped every where:* That place is an indifferent circumstance in the worship of God; and that we are no more to be restricted now, than in the days of Christ and his apostles.

Now, ye are not to think it strange, that I reckon these who warn not the people of the palpable sins of their day; or, who leave the public work, to be indirect and interpretative companions of Christ, in respect of their course; for supposing that they lead not people to own what they should condemn, or to condemn what they should own; yet they lay people open, and leave them to others to be laid aside: It is to be remembred what our Lord saith, *He that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad;* That is he who doth not what he is called unto, for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, is culpable with its hinderance; the tempers of people wedded and addicted to the carnal interests, are such that they are but wanting for the direct or indirect toleration, or allowing ministers for their own strengthning of their own corrupt courses, that they may go on with the more confidence and less shame: But, I say, these especially, who by office are called to endeavour the preventing of peoples straying, and yet do it not, will be found chargeable with their iniquity.

II. The second thing proponed to be spoken to from this doctrine was somewhat of the necessity of standing at a due distance from the flocks of Christ's companions, and not turning aside after them. I hope, I need not shew the necessity of standing aloof from popery, which is a mass and com-

plex of blaſphamy, idolatry, hereſy, ſuperſtition, cruelty, and rebellion. I hope alſo, that the duty of leaving the prelates and their curates, is alſo clear to the moſt part of you: But, whoever are engaged in, and carrying on a courſe of defection ought to be diſcountenanced by you, whatever eſteem you may have of their perſons. Their are ſundry the goodneſs and graciouſneſs of whoſe ſtate, we do not doubt, neither are we to meddle with it, for it is the ſecret of God; but becauſe the badneſs of their way, we cannot go alongſt with them: I ſay whoever are engaged in, and carrying on a courſe of defection, theſe ye ought to diſcountenance, till they reſent and relinquiſh that way: Somewhat of the neceſſity of this may appear, from theſe few things following.

Firſt, It is neceſſary, leſt otherwiſe ye partake of their ſin, 2 John verſe 11. *He that biddeth them God ſpeed, is partaker of their evil deeds.* There is no other way for you in this day, to be free of ſtrengthning their hands in their evil way.

Secondly, It is neceſſary, leſt otherwiſe ye receive of their puniſhment, Lev. xvi. 14, 15. 17. *If ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all theſe commandments, but break my covenant, I will alſo do this unto you, I will even appoint over you terror*, etc. *and ye ſhall be ſlain before your enemies: And if ye will not, for all this, hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me, then I will walk contrary unto you, alſo in fury, and I, even I, will chaſtiſe you ſeven times for your ſins:* Wherefore, *we muſt come out from amongſt them, and not touch the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. vi. 17. When we find a curſe threatned in ſcripture, we dare not walk with men in that courſe, for fear of the threatning.

Thirdly, It is neceſſary that we may thereby propogate the teſtimony of our day. I ſee not how we can carry it on by concurring with theſe who pervert it, or contradict it, or deſert it.

Fourthly, This is a way to obtain the promiſed mercy, Ezek. xiii. 23. "Therefore ye ſhall ſee no more vanity, nor "divine divinations; for I will deliver my people out of your "hand, and ye ſhall know that I am the Lord." Some will ſay, That they who thus diſcountenance any going on in defection, do take upon them the inflicting of a cenſure. But I ſay, not ſo; they may teſtify the ſenſe they have of the equity of the cenſure, whenſoever rightly and duly inflicted: And I may ſay, upon the other hand, that theſe who concur with them do rather (according to their way of argumenting) abſolve and looſe them from a cenſure; than theſe who refuſe concurrence do inflict it: And it is an act of kindneſs to diſcountenance a man, when he goes on in a cenſurable way: For, it is a mean to reclaim him.

III. The

III. The third thing was, ſome helps to avoid the evil of their ways. As,

1. Ye are to be afraid of the evil that is in it. The ſpouſe was thus, when ſhe enforceth her petition with this reaſon, "Why ſhould I be as one that turns aſide by the flocks of thy "companions?" Fear of an ill is a very great help to avoid it.

2. Ye are to be ſenſible of your propenſity to concur with them who are going in a courſe of defection: This was in the ſpouſe, as is clear both from her ſuit and argument enforcing it; therefore ſhe ſeems to have her eyes not moſtly upon Chriſt's wicked and worſe companions; for though ſhe abhorred their way moſt, yet ſhe would find in herſelf leaſt propenſity to follow it: But upon theſe, whoever they were after whom ſhe might moſt readily turn aſide.

3. Ye are to have a holy indignation againſt every evil courſe of error, and defection: This was in the ſpouſe, for ſhe ſays, "Why ſhould I be as one that turns aſide:" And in the pſalmiſt, for he ſays, "I hate every falſe way."

4. Ye are to pray to the Lord for leading you right and ſtraight paths; ſo doth the ſpouſe; her ſaying, "Tell me "where thou feedeſt, *etc.*" And when ye pray, ſee that your hearts be not cleaving to your own ways, and that you be willing to be determined by God according to his word.

5. Ye are to depend upon Chriſt for leading: He is given to be a leader unto you, and ye muſt hang upon him for it: Ye muſt pray for it, and wait for the return. O! He is a true guide; he is an unerring guide. See that ye put yourſelves in his leading, who can guide you in the time of greateſt diſtraction, confuſion, and darkneſs; and who can cauſe you eſcape ſnares, and avoid every turning: O! get all of you your love ſet upon lovely Chriſt, and let it be your care to eſchew ſinning; and whatſoever ſearching time of perſecution ye be tryſted with, ye ſhall be led to theſe cool-refreſhings, where he makes his flocks to reſt at noon.

Now, my friends, I deſire you to make a right uſe of what I have been ſaying, for, as I dare not ſtudy to pleaſe men, otherwiſe I could not be a ſervant of Chriſt, ſo I have neither deſigned nor deſired to irritate any of you: (far be that from me) It is your good I am ſeeking: But I have ſtudied to ſiſt myſelf under my maſter's eye, and to diſcharge my duty freely and plainly unto you, that I may have peace, when I ſhall anſwer for this night's work: And I know not how ſoon it may be.

PRE-

PREFACE.

I SADLY fear the moſt part of us knows not wherefore we are conveened here this night: And, I queſtion not, but the motives that have moved you are various. It may be that novelty hath moved ſome of you; and it may be that cuſtom hath moved others: And poſſibly to ſearch and try where they can do beſt, hath moved others. We ſhall not much quarrel with ſuch, we wiſh all would try and hold faſt that which is beſt. And it may be, other ſome, out of reſpect to their friends and acquaintances, have been moved to come. And, it may be, for fear of being ill looked upon, by theſe whom they eſteem to be good Chriſtian people, hath moved ſome, leſt they ſuſpect them to be falling back from the way of God and godlineſs. But, who is come here to caſt in their mite, to hold a departing Chriſt in the land? Who is come here panting and thirſting after the living God? We fear that theſe be the feweſt number, if all the reſt were drawn out from among them. If theſe were ſingled out, who are come to get ſome helpful token to their ſouls, we fear, our meeting would be very ſmall, and that we would not ſit ſo thick upon this piece of ground, that we are ſitting upon, and let me tell you if your deſign be any other, we wiſh a compaſſionate Chriſt would give you better ends.

But, oh! what if ſome be come out to ſpy what they can take notice of, and catch from our mouth; and to take notice whom they can ſee here: We wiſh there be none ſuch among us: But if their be any ſuch, though we cannot diſcern you, yet remember, you cannot be hid from an all-ſeeing God; and dear ſhall ye buy it when the Lord ſhall come through theſe clouds, in flaming fire, to take vengeance upon his enemies; then he ſhall take vengeance on you alſo, if ye do not timeouſly repent. But we ſay further to you that are come out to ſpy, you declare to the world, that you are in the devil's ſervice and that you reſolve to hold you there, and that you will venture on the devil's bargain. And what if ſome be come out to catch words, and to carry them away to falſe brethren; miſconſtructing our words, if ſo be that any thing eſcape us. But we adviſe you to do, as the prophet Iſaiah bids you, Iſa. viii. 20. "To the law and to the "teſtimony." And as our Lord bad his apoſtles, John v. 39. "Search the ſcriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which teſtify of me." If ye find any thing in what we ſay, contrary to the ſcriptures of truth,

truth, ye may have the more freedom to ſpeak againſt it; but if otherwiſe, dear ſhall ye pay for it in one day, if ye come to ſpy, and make our breaches wider, and do what ye can to mar and keep back the healing of a deadly wounded church. How dare ye come here to mock God? Dare ye come here, and not ſeek his bleſſing, and his preſence to his own work? Ah it is ſad to ſee many of your faces. We fear there is but few of you, that have been very ſerious for the Lord's bleſſing to the work.

But for you that are his followers, let your eyes be toward him: And whatever have been your ſhort-comings in time paſt, mourn for them, and do ſo no more in time to come. We have been a tempting, provoking generation; whatever trial or temptation hath come through the land, there hath ay been a great fleece gone with the ſtorm, and hath been carried down the ſtream. The Lord hath been threatning us with the ſword theſe years paſt, therefore it is high time for us to awake and beſtir ourſelves, before the decree go forth, and before ye be made to read your ſins, in your ſtrokes and judgments. We have been a ſinful people; few among us have keeped clean hands, and clean garments. But ſtay till the popiſh prieſt's come in, and then ye will be enjoined by authority to go to maſs; and we fear many of you will run to it: We wiſh that none would take ſuch bad courſes; but the truth is, ye have given ſuch bad preſages in time paſt, that we fear many of you will be drawn away with what is coming. It is an eaſy matter for him to put a ſtop to the current of your backſliding, and you to be helped, through his bleſſing, to ſtand in an hour of temptation and trial. Therefore we ſhall give you ſome advices, whereby ye may be helped to chooſe the good and refuſe the evil.

1. Reſolve upon it, that, in the Lord's ſtrength, henceforth, never to make any thing, that is ſinful, your ſtay or ſtrength; ye all know this to be ſinful, to make any thing in time your ſtay or ſtrength, or truſt. Oh! when will ye do what ye know to be duty, and abſtain from what ye know to be ſin? Would many of you do what your conſciences determines, it would be good for you: But, your putting truſt in worldly things, and your miſtruſting of God, is the great cauſe of many of your compliances with the ſinful courſes of the time. Many of you have done things, that the word of God, and your own conſcience, hath condemnd you in many a time. We tell you from the Lord, except ye repent ye ſhall periſh: So we would fain have you, from this time forth, reſolving, in his ſtrength, never to make any thing, that is ſinful your ſtay, and your truſt, whatever ſhew or pretence it may have: Do not truſt in it; for whatever ye pretend to truſt in beneath the Lord JEHOVAH, it will prove

like

like a broken reed, which when a man leaneth unto, goeth into his hand; or like the ſnow before the ſun and wind in a hot day.

2. As ye would not ſtay or truſt in any unlawful thing, ſo let nothing that is lawful be exceſſively loved, or doted upon by you. Beware that ye give not more love to the creature than ye ſhould; for, though it be lawful to love father and mother, to love wife and children, houſes and lands, yet when theſe come in competition with his truths, and ye muſt either quit Chriſt and his truths, or quit them; if ye put them in Chriſt's room, and let Chriſt go, your love is not right. Our love to theſe things ſhould be a ſubordination to the love of God, and ſhould not be ſupreme; therefore let every thing be kept in its own room.

3 Lay down this reſolution, in the ſtrength of the Lord, that through his grace ye ſhall quit no neceſſary truth, that ye are called to witneſs for; reſolve through his grace, that ye ſhall not turn your back upon any of Chriſt's truths, Now, all the difficulty is to get hearts to unite and join with theſe truths, when they come to your door, when it comes to that of it, that ye muſt either ſuffer or ſin. O then! do not baulk any duty, do not prefer your houſes, profits, pleaſures, or your natural life, to his glory. What is the cauſe that the mouths of your conſciences are ſtoped? Nothing but this, that when the temptation comes to your door, that ye behoved either to quit his truths, or elſe quit with your own profits and pleaſures, riches and honour, that then ye quit his truths, and keeped your profits and pleaſures, riches and honour: And ſo God in his righteous judgment, hath ſtopped the mouth of your conſciences, and they are ſilent; and ſo ye think ye have done no ill, or no wrong to God, nor to his cauſe or intereſt. Your conſcience at firſt reproved and cried out againſt you; but many have licked themſelves whole again: Your profits and pleaſures is a plaiſter, that hath put conſcience ſo dumb, that it ſays nothing; and ſo ye have peace from a dumb, cuterized conſcience, which (as the ſcripture ſpeaketh of it) is *feared as with a hot iron;* and ſo ye think that ye have done no wrong: But ſtay till your conſciences be awakened, and then ye will get an other ſight, and they will tell you another tale: They did but bark at you, when ye ran away from God and his truths, but when they are awakened, they will bite you; and the gnawing worm of an ill-conſcience, will then rug your ſoul, and tear it in pieces. O! pray for a merciful wakening. Pray, that ye get not ſuch a wakening as Judas got. When ye are wakened, ye will ſay, "What profit have I now of all theſe things, "whereof I am aſhamed?"

4. Do

4. Do not defend, extenuate, or continue in your ſin, as if it were no ſin: Therefore beg grace from a gracious God, to give you a right ſight and diſcovery of your ſins; even ſuch a diſcovery as will affect the heart; ſuch a diſcovery and ſight of it, as will make you look no more light on it, nor defend it, nor continue in it.

5. Reſolve through the grace of God, to conſult more with the word of God, than with carnal reaſon, or with carnal friends and relations. There are many, that when the word, and God, and their conſcience checks them for any thing they have done amiſs, or when they are tempted to any ſin, then they will run away to this profane perſon, and the other profane perſon, for advice and counſel; but ye ſhould conſult with the word of God rather, that cannot err nor lie. When the beſt of men are left of God, it is but vanity to ſeek advice from them: Ye may mind Peter's advice to our Lord, when he was going up to Jeruſalem to ſuffer, he was telling his diſciples, and warning them of it: And Peter's advice to him was, *Be it far from thee, Lord: This ſhall not be unto thee.* This was a godly man's counſel; but neither right of itſelf, nor yet accepted of, nor approven by Chriſt, to whom it was given; and yet it was out of love to Chriſt's perſon that it was given; for, Peter had no will to part with his dear maſter, and to loſe his company; and yet he was ſharply reproved by Chriſt who ſaid unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me, for thou favoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men.* What hath moved many to comply with enemies in theſe years paſt, but this? O! ſay they, we muſt either obey the powers, and do what authority commands, or elſe we will be put out of houſe and hold; and nothing in the world will be left us: So they prefer their worldly things to the commandments of God, and to the peace of their conſcience: And ye ſay, by your yielding to the enemies, and miſtruſting of God; if the Lord will not take care of us, we muſt take care of ourſelves.

6 Reſolve in the Lord's ſtrength, from henceforth to pleaſe the Lord. O! will ye reſolve, through grace, to prefer the pleaſing of him, to the pleaſing of men, or yourſelves? This would be an excellent reſolution, if backed with the Lord's bleſſing. Will ye do, as Joſhua did, put on ſuch a reſolution as he put on, when he ſaith, *Chooſe you this day whom you will ſerve, whether the god whom your father ſerved: But as for me, and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord,* Joſh. xxiv. 15. Then put on honeſt reſolutions, that ye will follow the Lord, by walking with him in all well pleaſing; for the day is coming when ye would give ten thouſand worlds in exchange for your ſouls, if they were all at your diſpoſing. There was a rich man, that had taken much pains for the world, to get up a

great eſtate, for him and his poſterity after him; and when he was dying, he called for his eldeſt ſon, with a burning candle, and eſſaying to hold his finger in the flame of the candle but for a little time, he could not; then he called to his eldeſt ſon, to put his finger into it, but he could not endure it; then he cried out, with tears, and ſaid, "How ſhall I a-"bide the devouring fire; that everlaſting burning? I have "taken much pains (ſaid he) to gather up an heap of the earth "to thee, and thou cannot do that for me. O! what a fool "have I been? for now I have loſt my ſoul." When men demand any thing of you that is unlawful, ye ſhould anſwer them thus, "Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to "hearken unto you, more than unto God, judge ye?

7. Reſolve, in the Lord's ſtrength, rather to ſuffer than to ſin: Make Moſes's choice, "Rather to ſuffer affliction "with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin "for a ſeaſon," Heb. xi. 25. Whenever ye ſee or hear of temptations to ſin coming, then beware of them, even altho' attended with enticing allurements to gain the favour of men; better all the world be thine enemy, than to have God to be thy enemy; it matters not who be thy friend, if God be thy enemy; for, he is the greateſt enemy, or the greateſt friend of any; for, *theſe whom he curſes who can bleſs? and whom he bleſſes, who can curſe?* So it will be your wiſdom to make him your friend, and then ye need not care who be your enemy, devils or men: But, if he be thine enemy, then devils and all the creatures are armed againſt thee The wiſe man ſaith, *When a man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* And on the contrary, when a man's ways do not pleaſe the Lord, then he maketh all the creatures to turn his enemies: Friends and all then turn againſt him. We tell you from the Lord, that ſinning is the greateſt evil; but ſuffering may conſiſt with God's favour: Sin makes us more like the devil, whereas ſuffering makes us more like unto God: Sin, if we do not crucify it, it will crucify and deſtroy us: But ſuffering fits us for heaven: Who was it that got their robes waſhed in the blood of the Lamb? Who but they that came through many tribulations: Therefore reſolve rather to ſuffer than to ſin.

8. Reſolve, in the Lord's ſtrength, to follow that courſe that will advance the honour of God moſt; and give you moſt ground to expect God's favour; and whatever courſe of life decourts you of the favour of God, flee from that. And alſo, we adviſe you, that whatever ye deſire, know and conſider them with their circumſtances wherewith they are clothed, or attended. There are many things that appear at the firſt look to be very fair-like, but when rightly conſidered, they begin to appear in another colour, and not ſo fair as at the

the firſt appearance they did in their outſide. At the beginning ye would think them good, but if ye will but ſeriouſly conſider, and look to the riſe thereof, and the tendency thereof, ye will judge of them otherwiſe. Thus it is with this popiſh toleration whatever fair pretences may be in it, if ye look on it rightly, ye will find it to be the ſtrongeſt bond of ſin, that ever the church of Scotland was bound with. We deſire to be free with you, this toleration is a thing that is moſt hateful in the ſight of God, and deſigned by men, for bad, politic, ſubtile, and deceitful ends. It is that all the ſubjects muſt obey; as is clear from that proclamation that came forth, in February laſt; all the ſubjects muſt of neceſſity obey the ſame; this is commanded by the granters abſolute authority, which none of our kings did ever offer to aſſume to themſelves; or ſpoke of ſuch a title belonging to themſelves. But when a popiſh uſurper comes forth, and commands ſuch a thing, it is preſently obeyed and cloſed with; and ſo, it is come to that now, the kirk hath no power, but what he gives her; and what may be the upſhot of that, but that thereafter there be no parliaments, and then after that no proteſtants. And then after theſe deſigns are accompliſhed, nothing but a bloody ſword: But ye will ſay that is nothing, but to fright bairns; but, I trow, France looked as little for it once, as ye do now: And what ſad things hath their liberty brought them to, ye have heard; and what your brave liberty will bring us to, they are blind who ſee not. What think ye that it tends to? The burying of our covenants, and work of reformation. Look what came forth in the proclamation, in October, *to wit*, That there ſhould be no houſe nor field conventicles. But ſuch as embrace this popiſh toleration, and come to be limited and reſtricted with it. O! ye will find it, if ye ſearch narrowly, that our miniſters are ſo bound up, that if any of them ſhould preach in defence of the covenants, or the lawfulneſs of defenſive arms, in caſe of a maſſacre, that ſuch preaching ſhould be called rebellion; alſo, it is a drawing near to that which they ſhould be at, even the burying of all our teſtimonies for truth; and this is not a burying, but a ſelling of the truth. But our oppoſers will ſay, we muſt take part, and leave part: But we anſwer, who made them cutters and carvers in God's matters? Moſes was an honeſt man, but he is ſoon forgotten among us; he would not quit a hoof to Pharaoh. If theſe things were mens own, that they cut and carve in, they might do ſo; but they may not do ſo in God's matters.

Now, let the experience of their hearers prove this; our covenants are not now mentioned by them: The ſworn enemies have burnt the ſolemn league and covenant; and now muſt we bury it? But they will ſay, that they preach faith and repentance. But will ever general faith and repentance take

people to heaven? It is the application that is the life of preaching. Will ye believe, or repent, except ye know what to believe, and what to repent of? But they will ſay, May we not accept of this liberty, as well as the Jews did accept of liberty granted to them by Cyrus? We anſwer, (1.) If the granter had given a commandment to bring back all our captives, that are caſt out to foreign nations. (2.) If he had ſet at liberty all our priſoners, without impoſing any thing upon their conſciences, contrary to the word of God, our covenants, and work of reformation. (3.) If he had commanded us to do all, that is commanded in the written word of God in the juſt and holy law of our God, as Cyrus did command the Jews, we could have had fewer ſcruples to embrace it: But ſeeing there is ſuch reſtrictions and bands laid upon accepters, that they may preach nothing but what the granter pleaſeth: And ſo, ſeeing commanded duties may not all be preſſed; nor the evil of ſin, and compliance with the abominations of the time holden forth, to be evil in the ſight of God, and deſtructive to the ſouls of men and women, we cannot, and dare not embrace it. But, by this courſe the defections of the time goes on ſtill; but ye will ſay, we have gotten honeſt men to preach to us, and what is the matter, what a company of giddy headed fools ſay. I anſwer, the reaſon, that theſe whom ye call honeſt men, are ſo well looked upon by the bulk of people, is becauſe they cloak people's ſins, and do not reprove their compliance with the enemies teſters, banders, and all other perjured oath-ſwearers, and are all received into communion with them, without ever deſiring the public acknowledgment of theſe things to be ſin. And now they may not reprove ſuch ſins, but muſt rather approve of them: And becauſe they cannot reprove the ſins of ſuch as come to them, who have turned their back upon God and forſaken his truths, they are honeſt men in the account of theſe compliers, that join with them; but they love not the miniſters that would reprove them for ſuch ſins. But ye that are the people of God, conſider your work: We are ſure, this toleration was never deſigned for our good. It hath divided the Chriſtians in Britain and Ireland, more than ever any thing did, ſince the change of the government. By this they have divided the ſufferers from the ſufferers: Thus they think, that they cannot do God better ſervice, than to make the ſuffering party odious to one another. Take heed what ye do, for the courſe is dangerous; for faithfulneſs, and freedom, is not to be found among them that are embracers of and compliers with this toleration. Therefore, let us not juggle nor bourd with God: For dig as deep as ye will or can, the Lord ſeeth, and they, and we both, will be found out by him.

To his name be praiſe.

SERMON.

SERMON XXXVIII.

CANTICLES v. 16.

His mouth is moſt ſweet: Yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.

THERE is none among you all, but ye have one thing or other, that is your beloved: And, O but it be ſtrange, that any ſhould beſtow their love upon baſe objects! for love is that, ſaith Solomon, *that many waters cannot quench, neither can the floods drown it: Though a man ſhould give all the ſubſtance of his houſe for it, it would be utterly contemned*, Cant. viii. 7. Then to give that noble grace of love to baſe objects, it is ill beſtowed indeed: And, yet alas! how many are there, who beſtow it on baſe objects, *to wit*, on worldly profits and pleaſures, *&c.* And for theſe, ſome will quit conſcience and all, to obtain baſe objects. And therefore, O man! O woman! ſeek out a more noble object for your love. And therefore O friends! ſet your love upon Jeſus Chriſt; for all other objects are but baſe objects: For, angels are not ſufficient objects for love; for love is that which is ſuperlatively noble; no created things are ſufficient objects for love. Ay, ſirs, love is ſuperlatively noble in the creature, when it is ſet upon the right object. Some writers repreſent love to us in this emblem of ſeraphims wings, always ſtretched forth; it is that which the wiſe man ſpeaks of, Eccl. viii. 16 *For alſo there is that neither day nor night, ſeeth ſleep with his eyes.* Love is impatient of conſolation, till it obtain its object, it mounts over all difficulties, and all is but loſt labour when it is ſet upon any other object than Chriſt: For love is that which is impatient, and yet very patient, impatient of taking any reſt until it obtain its object, and yet will patiently wait on long, till it obtain its object; it cannot want that, be what it will; love though it get many back-ſets, yet it ſets ay to again, and will not give over. So it is here with the ſpouſe, when ſhe ſays, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

Chriſt hath been deſiring her before to open to him; and therein he uſeth much fair language to her; *for*, ſaith he, *open to me, my ſiſter, my love, my dove, my undefiled.* And he uſeth arguments to prevail with her; *for*, ſaith he, *my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* But all doth not prevail with her; for, ſhe gave him a very lazy an-

anſwer: *I have put of my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?* Alas! alas! ſirs, lazineſs is that which puts many from their duty. Folk will not be at pains, to let Chriſt into their hearts: But now Chriſt hath a mind to let her know her lazineſs. He gives her a touch, he puts in his hand by the hole of the door; he toucheth her heart, and then goes away again: And preſently ſhe gets up. O for a touch of his finger upon our hearts this day, it would make us lay by our lazineſs. *I roſe up to open to my beloved, but my beloved hath withdrawn himſelf and was gone.* It coſt her a ſore ſkin, and a bare back before ſhe found her beloved: For, *the watchmen that went about the city found her; they ſmote her and wounded her; the keepers of the wall took away her vail from her.* So they make her a ſore ſkin and a bare back, by their cruelty to her. O! ſay they, ye make too much din ſeeking your beloved; ye might ſtay at home, and ſeek him in your chamber, and not run ſo from mountain to mountain, cumbering all the country with ſeeking your beloved, and putting yourſelf in hazard.

Now, when the daughters of Jeruſalem heard her charging them, and making ſuch ado for her beloved; they begin to be inquiſitive at her, to know what *her beloved was, more than another beloved.* And then ſhe begins to deſcribe his parts and comelineſs, ſaying, "My beloved is white and ruddy, "the chief among ten thouſand. His head is as the moſt fine "gold; his locks are buſhy and black as a raven. His eyes "are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, waſhed with "milk, and fitly ſet. His cheecks are as a bed of ſpices; as "ſweet flowers: His lips like lilies, dropping ſweet ſmelling "myrrh. His hands are as gold rings ſet with the beryl: "His belly as bright ivory overlaid with ſaphires. His legs "are as pillars of marble ſet upon ſockets of fine gold. His "countenance is as Lebanon; excellent as the cedars. His "mouth is moſt ſweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is "my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſa-"lem."

The ſpouſe hear gives a noble deſcription of Chriſt, though he was abſent: He is altogether lovely to a believer, either preſent or abſent: For, it cannot be ſaid of Chriſt to his ſpouſe; as it was ſaid in another ſenſe, out of ſight, out of langure. For, here the ſpouſe was even ſick of love for Chriſt, though abſent. Now, when ſhe had ended her deſcription of him to the daughters of Jeruſalem, ſhe ſays, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

And now the doctrine which ariſeth from the words is this,

Doct. *That the love, and lovelineſs of Chriſt, is the foundation of the believer's love to him.*

In

In handling of which I ſhall,

I. Prove the doctrine.

II. I ſhall give you ſeveral properties of Chriſt's lovelineſs.

III. I ſhall ſhew you wherein Chriſt is lovely.

IV. I ſhall ſhew you ſeveral qualifications that are requiſite to be in your love to him.

I. Then for proof of the doctrine, that the love and lovelineſs of Chriſt, is the foundation of our love to him; ye may ſee it clearly in this fifth chapter of Cant that the lovely deſcription, that the ſpouſe gives of Chriſt, is the ground and foundation of our love to him. For this alſo, ſee 1 John iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God; but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.* And, ver. 19. *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* I ſay, this proves that the love and lovelineſs of Chriſt, is the foundation of our love to him. And alſo John xx. 27, 28. *Then ſaith he to Thomas, reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: and reach hither thy hand, and thruſt it into my ſide; and be not faithleſs but believing.* And Thomas anſwered and ſaid unto him, *My Lord and my God.* O friends! this is the prevailing motive with Thomas's unbelief, even the real ſight of the love of God in Chriſt. Now having proven this point.

II. I come in the ſecond place, to let you ſee ſome of the lovely properties of that excellent love of Chriſt. And,

1. The firſt property of Chriſt's love is, That is from eternity, Jer. xxxi. 3. "The Lord hath appeared of old un-" to me, ſaying, Yea I have loved thee with an everlaſting love. " Therefore with loving kindneſs have I drawn thee." Pſal. lxxxix. 30, 31, 32, 33. "If his children forſake my law, and " walk not in my judgments: If they break my ſtatutes, and " keep not my commandments, then will I viſit their tranſ-" greſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes: Nevertheleſs, my loving kindneſs will I not utterly take from " them, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail." O my friends! but there be many ſweet promiſes within the bible; and this is one, that notwithſtanding all the ſad paſſages of providence, that come in the way of the elect, none of them do prove, that the Lord hath taken away his loving kindneſs from them: *For, his loving kindneſs will he not take from them, nor ſuffer his faithfulneſs to fail.* All the infirmities of human nature, do not make a child of God uncomely in Chriſt's ſight; for though they be black with ſinful infirmities, yet they are comely in his ſight, Cant. i. 5. So that, although his love be not always ſo diſcernible to our feeling as we would have it; yet it alters no more than the ſun doth his natural courſe of heat and brightneſs, in a cloudy and dark day: So that this is a noble property of Chriſt's love; it is

from

from eternity to eternity, without any relation; for, *whom he loves he loves to the end.*

2. The ſecond property of Chriſt's love is, That it is a ſtrong love; which appears, (1.) From what he hath done for ſinners. (2.) From what he gives to ſinners.

(1.) He hath done great things for ſinners: He took upon himſelf all the ſinleſs infirmities of human nature, not ſinful nature; yea, he endured a ſhameful and lingering death, beſides a burden of wrath that he had waded through; ſuch a flood of wrath, as would have drowned all the ſons and daughters of Adam to all eternity. Thus he who *knew no ſin, became a curſe for us, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. O! *greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* O! my friends, if ye will follow Chriſt through all the ſteps of his humiliation, ye may ſee that the love of Chriſt is ſtrong love which made him undergo ſuch things for ſinners.

(2.) He gives great things to ſinners; whereby he ſhews the ſtrength of his love to them: For, *he gives grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*, Pſalm viii. 4. 11. For he ſaith, *Father I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou haſt given me*, John xvii. 24. Chriſt gives the believer union with himſelf, and communion in glory with the Father; even a ſhare of that glory which the Father giveth him, he giveth them; and he gives them a crown of righteouſneſs, which ſhall never fade away; and gives them to drink of the rivers of his pleaſures, that are at his right hand for evermore. O! my friends Chriſt doth not prig with his ſpouſe; he will keep nothing back from her, that he ſees to be for her profit. O but his love be ſtrong and he requires no more for all that he hath done, and all that he hath given, but that he ſee the travail of his ſoul. He will think but little of all that he hath done, if we will but accept of his love, and lay our love upon him; yea, ſo may be ſaid of him, as was ſaid of Jacob, The ſeven years that he ſerved for Rachel, ſeemed to him but a few days, for the love that he bare unto her. O! his love is ſo ſtrong, that although thou that art one of his own childrens ſhouldſt run away from him never ſo faſt, yet his love will overtake thee, and bring thee back again. Paul ran very faſt in oppoſition to his love, when he was going to Damaſcus to perſecute the church; but Chriſt's love overtook him ſuddenly. Manaſſeh, he ran very faſt away from Chriſt, when he made the ſtreets of Jeruſalem to run with innocent blood, and ſet an abomination in the houſe of God, and uſed witchcraft; and yet Chriſt's love it overtook him, and brought him back again from the pit. If thou be one of thoſe that the Father hath given

given to the Son, though thou ſhouldſt run to the brink of hell, he will bring thee back again from thence

3. The third property of Chriſt's love is, That it is pure love and ſincere love: *Herein is his love, not that we loved him; but that he loved us.* Not for any advantage that he can have by us, for he is infinite in all perfections without us; therefore we can neither enrich him, nor add any more glory to him. We may well magnify his glory; that is all we can do, and all the advantage is our own. Chriſt's love is not a baſe and whoriſh love, he loves us not for his own good or advantage, but for our real good and advantage: It is pure and ſincere love; for all the advantage is our own.

4. The fourth property of Chriſt's love is. That it is an inriching love; for, theſe upon whom this love is beſtowed, they are no more poor: For, how can they be poor, who have Chriſt for their riches? For ſaith the apoſtle, *All are yours, and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's*, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. If ye have this love beſtowed upon you, then all other things are made to ſerve you for your good; ye ſhall lack no good thing; For though *the lions young do lack and ſuffer hunger, they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing*, Pſal. xxxiv. 10.

5. The fifth property of Chriſt's love is, That it is a free love; he gives his love freely, without any reward; and ſo it is free love: For the offer is alike to all; if ye will but take it off his hand, he makes open proclamation of it to you all ſaying, *Ho! every one that thirſteth come ye to the waters*, Iſa. lv. 1. O! my friends, all other love is infinitely beneath this: *He took not on him the nature of angels, but the ſeed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. O! my friends, God hath made us the centre of his love: And therefore I beſeech you, do not deſpiſe his love: He came not to redeem any of the fallen angels, but the ſeed of Abraham.

III. I ſhall ſhew you wherein Chriſt is lovely. And,

1. Chriſt is lovely in his perſon. O but he be a lovely perſon! *for in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*, Col. ii. 9. In him is all the perfection of the human nature: He is perfect in knowledge; for the Spirit is not given him in meaſure. This was his donative knowledge. He is perfect in infuſed knowledge; for as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *grace is powred into thy lips; and thy God hath anointed thee above thy fellows*, Pſalm xlv. 2. 7. He is perfect in experimental knowledge: For, *he increaſed in wiſdom and ſtature, and in favour with God and man*, Luke ii. 52. All this is but the perfection of his human nature: But as he is God, who can behold him or deſcribe him?

2. Chriſt is lovely in his ordinances among his people, Cant. ii. 9. *My beloved is like a roe, or a young hart: Behold*

he ſtandeth behind our wall; he looketh forth at the windows, ſhewing himſelf through the lattice. O ſirs! Chriſt is very lovely in ſhewing himſelf through the lattice: And if he would but blink upon us this day, it would make our ſouls with Peter to ſay, *It is good for us to be here*, Matth. xvii 4. David thought him lovely in his ordinances, when he ſaid, *I was glad when they ſaid unto me, Let us go down into the houſe of the Lord*, Pſal. cxxii. 1. *O! a day in his courts, is better than a thouſand elſewhere*, Pſal. lxxxiv. 10. O my friends! follow him in his ordinances, in hopes to get a ſight of his face; and whether ye get a ſight of him or no, yet he is altogether lovely and beautiful. As the ſun in the firmament is beautiful, when under a cloud, in a cloudy day, when it cannot be ſeen, ſo Chriſt is beautiful to his people even in the time of his abſence, when he hideth his face and cannot be ſeen. O that Chriſt would be pleaſed to take the vail from off our eyes that we might ſee his beauty!

3. Chriſt is lovely in his commandments and precepts; and therefore David ſays, *O! how love I thy law? It is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments, haſt made me wiſer than mine enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more underſtanding than all my teachers; for thy teſtimonies are my meditation. I underſtood more than the ancients, becauſe I keep thy precepts*, Pſal. cxix. 97, 98, 99, 100. O but his commandments be lovely! and therefore we, with Paul, may ſay, Rom. vii. 12. *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and juſt and good.* It is that which is the tranſcript of the will of God to us, and therefore ſhould be loved: But, alas! *we are carnal and ſold under ſin.*

4. Chriſt is lovely in his promiſes. Where is the Chriſtian that will not ſet to his ſeal of approbation to this truth, that Chriſt is lovely in his promiſes? For there are promiſes of grace, whereby believers are enabled to do their duty; and whereby the ſoul is made to rejoice in God: As Mary did, Luke i. 46, 47. *And Mary ſaid, my ſoul doth magnify the Lord; and my ſpirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.* O my friends! the lovelineſs of his promiſes, hath made many go away from their prayers, as Hannah did, with their countenance no more ſad. By this believers are able to diſpel their doubts and fears; and by this believers are fortified againſt trials and perſecutions.

5. Chriſt is lovely in his graces. Hence Solomon ſays, Cant. i. 2. *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine. Becauſe of the ſavour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.* O but Chriſt be lovely in his graces! yea, he is lovely in the influences of his graces, that he beſtows upon

upon believers; ſo that it makes them with Ephraim to ſay, *What have I to do any more with idols?* Hoſ. xiv. 8.

6. Chriſt is lovely in his government, and in his ſteps of majeſty among his people: *For he hath on his veſture, and on his thigh, a name written* KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS, Rev. xix. 16. By commiſſion from his Father, *The government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders*, Iſa ix. 6. He rules and orders all the affairs of his people, to his glory and their good; yea, he counteracts the wicked in their devices, when they intend to deſtroy his people; he diſpoſeth them only for the trial of their faith; which is better than that of gold that periſheth; and thereby diſcovers the rottenneſs and hypocriſy, that is in many of our hearts. Thus the way that enemies judge for our ruin, he, by his government, makes them work for us, *a far more exceeding weight of glory*. And alſo, he is lovely in his government, in the hearts of his people, in diſpoſing of their affections on himſelf, and in ſwaying their actions according to his laws.

7. Chriſt is lovely in his croſs: But I know that fleſh, and blood will not ſubſcribe to this; yet it is true; *for if ye ſuffer for righteouſneſneſs ſake, happy are ye, for the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth upon you*, 1 Pet. iv. 14. I may atteſt to the experience of the ſaints, for this truth; for when the croſs ſeemed to ly heavy upon them, then they have found the love of God ſweeteſt unto them. Paul and Silas ſang Pſalms in the priſon: And ſome have gone valiantly through death: ſo they found no pain therein. And have ſaid, That they would not change their lot, with all the pleaſures of the world; therefore do not fear at the croſs: But comfort yourſelves with this pleaſant promiſe, Iſa. xliii. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers they ſhall not overflow thee: When thou walkeſt through the fire thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee.* O my friends! do not ſtumble at his croſs, for he hath a chariot to carry you in: "It is made of the wood of Lebanon; "the pillars of it are ſilver, the bottom of it of gold; the "covering of it of purple, and the midſt thereof paved with "love for the daughters of Jeruſalem," Cant. iii. 9, 10. O! ye will find him ſtedfaſt in his love; ſo that in the end ye will ſubſcribe to this, That he is lovely in his croſs.

8. Chriſt is lovely in his houſe above. It is ſaid, Rev. viii. 1. "And when he had opened the ſeventh ſeal, there was "great ſilence in heaven, about the ſpace of half an hour." All the glorified creatures were ſtricken ſilent, with aſtoniſhment to behold his love in the work of redemption. But all that we can attain to here, is but a glimpſe of his love; for it is infinitely above our conception: So that, if ever we win to ſee his lovelineſs in his houſe above, we will even think ſhame

of what we have ſpoken of his love here, it hath been ſo far above our capacity. It is ſaid of ſeraphims, "Each one had "ſix wings; with twain he covered his face, with twain he "covered his feet; and with twain he did fly," Iſa. iv. 2. *With twain he covered his face*, that we cannot diſcern his glory; *with twain he covered his feet*, that we cannot diſcern his goings; *and with twain he did fly*; that is, very ſwiftly in his motion. O ſirs! we cannot take up his lovelineſs in his houſe above: Moſes got but a ſight of his back parts, who was very near to him. We would not be able to endure his lovelineſs in his houſe above, until we win there. And there we ſhall behold it, though we ſhall not comprehend it; yet it is his demand from the Father, John xvii. 24. "Father, I will, "that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where "I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou haſt "given me."

Now, ye have heard that Chriſt is lovely in his perſon; lovely in his ordinances; lovely in his commandments; lovely in his promiſes; lovely in his graces; lovely in his government; lovely in his croſs; and lovely in his houſe above: Therefore take him for your beloved, and for your friend.

IV. I ſhall ſhew you the ſeveral qualifications that are requiſite to be in your love to Chriſt. And,

1. It muſt be new love. We muſt have a new heart; for we cannot love them with the old heart; therefore we ſhould ſeek of him a new heart, *For, if any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature: old things are paſt away, behold all things are become new*, 2 Cor v. 17. Not only a new body, but a new creature. It muſt be a new created quality, running through the whole man. Wherefore is our obedience called new obedience, in our catechiſms? But that our obedience muſt come from a new created quality, in heart; and all the members of our body muſt act anew for Chriſt: And, with Ephraim muſt ſay, *What have I to do any more with idols?* Hoſ. xiv. 8.

2. We muſt love Chriſt truly and ſincerely. There are many who profeſs moſt friendſhip to Chriſt in words, who yet in deeds do but deny him; But ye muſt love him truly and ſincerely.

3 We muſt love him intirely: Ye muſt love him in all that he is to you, and all that he requires of you: Ye muſt keep nothing back of all that he requires: There are many who would be content to take Chriſt for their prophet, to teach them; and for their prieſt to appeaſe the wrath of God towards them; who yet will not be content to take him to be their king, to reign over them in their hearts: They do not ſubmit to his government; for, they have loved idols, and after them will they go: But, my friends ye muſt love him intirely

intirely with all the inconveniences that may come in your way: Ye muſt make a full reſignation of yourſelves over unto him: O! keep nothing back; reſerve him your time and your ſtrength. O! my friends make an ample reſignation of you and yours up to his will; you muſt lay all at his feet. The reaſon why many ſtep aſide in an hour of temptation, is, becauſe they love not Chriſt intirely. Therefore, if ye deſire to be kept ſtedfaſt, in an hour of temptation, love him intirely, and lay all at his feet.

4. We muſt love him with a ſuperlative love: Ye muſt love him above all things. But ye will ſay, May we love no other thing but Chriſt? I anſwer, yes, ye may love other things, in ſo far as your love of them, may ſerve to bring Chriſt's love to you, and carry forth your love to him: But, I ſay, ye muſt love him above all things; when he and other things ſtand as competitors, ye muſt then let all go, and cleave to Chriſt: Ye muſt let the world, your name, credit, reputation, relations, yea, and your life all go; ye muſt not count theſe dear to part with for Chriſt.

5. We muſt love him for himſelf only, and not for any reward that is to be expected from him; for that is but an idolatrous love. Therefore ſearch and try yourſelves, to know what is the ground wherefore ye love him; whether it be for hire and reward, or for himſelf. Satan would fain have fathered this falſe kind of love upon Job, when he ſaid, "Doth Job fear God for nought: Haſt thou not made a "hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that "he hath on every ſide? And haſt bleſſed the work of his "hands, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the land? (there-"fore it is his common good to love thee) But put forth "thine hand, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe "thee to thy face," Job i. 9, 10, 11. But in this Satan was a falſe liar; for when all Job's gear was gone, he ſaid "The "Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be "the name of the Lord," Job i. 21.

And now, my friends, ye muſt love Chriſt with a new love, with a ſincere love, with an intire love, with a ſuperlative love; and ye muſt love him for himſelf, and not for any thing ye get from him; otherwiſe he will reject your love, and will not take it off your hand. Now, what ſay ye to it, man or woman, lad or laſs, are ye content to take Chriſt for the object of your love? Ye heard that he is a lovely perſon; and ye heard ſeveral of the properties of his love; and will ye not then ſay with the ſpouſe, *He is altogether lovely; he is our beloved and our friend?* But, I fear, there be ſeveral ſorts of folk here this day, that will make light of this offer. And there are nine ſorts of folk, who will return us ſome anſwer, and but one of them good.

1. There

1. There are ſome that have choſen idols, and after them they will go: But let me tell thee, O man or woman, who haſt choſen other lovers than Chriſt, go where you will, ye will not find the like of him: For all other lovers, laid in the balance with him, are leſs than nothing: Therefore it is your blindneſs and madneſs, that makes you put any thing in Chriſt's room. O that our ſoul could weep for you in ſecret places!

2. There are others that would cloſe with Chriſt, but they think, that he is a hard maſter and auſtere. They think, that he hath auſtere government; therefore they cannot be ruled by his laws; but they muſt have elbow room to lying, ſwearing, and Sabbath-breaking. They will not take on the yoke of his commandments; and they think it a hard ſaying to take up the croſs daily.

3 There are ſome who are ready to ſay, that they will cloſe with Chriſt, but they will not do it yet; they muſt dwell a while with their idols. But, O my friends! do not put off Chriſt till another time, when he is now calling for your love: Go not away with Felix, ſaying, *At another time*, leſt the ſentence be paſt againſt you, that ye ſhall never enter into his reſt. He will not take the out-wails of your love; therefore, if ye will not take his offer in the preſent time, the ſentence will be paſt againſt you, and ſo as he called, and ye would not anſwer, ye ſhall call, and he will not anſwer you; but *will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh*, Prov. i. 26.

4. There are ſome that would love Chriſt; but they would love their idols alſo: But, I ſay, ye muſt love him alone; he will admit of no rivals: If any of you bring your idols unto Chriſt, he will put you and your idols away again: There is no room for you and your idols, in the ſtrait way that leadeth unto life. Indeed you and your idols may walk on in the broad way to hell, but ye cannot walk together in the narrow way to heaven.

5. There are ſome that would love ſomething in Chriſt, but they will not love whole Chriſt: They love not the ſpiritual extent of his commandments. But, I ſay, ye muſt love every bit of Chriſt: Ye muſt love him both in his commandments and promiſes, and threatnings: Ye muſt love him all or none of him; for he is all love-worthy.

6. There are ſome would love Chriſt, if they could get gear with him. O ſirs! if there had been houſes and lands to have been dealt here this day, there had been more up and down the land, to have been partakers thereof. But, O my friends! is not Chriſt himſelf riches enough? Will ye take him for your goods and gear, and then ye ſhall not want riches, if ye ſee it for your profit, ye ſhall not want any thing ye ſtand in

need

need of, here and hereafter: Ye ſhall get reſt above. Take himſelf, and ye ſhall get reſt from all your weariſome troubles; where ye ſhall not ceaſe day nor night, to praiſe the Lord, for that ſhall be your element.

7. There are ſome that would love Chriſt, if he were ſeparated from the croſs; but they cannot think on bearing the croſs: But, let me tell you, Chriſt is lovely in his croſs; and, if ye will ſet your love upon Chriſt, ye will find this upon your experience. O my friends! if ye knew the worth of his love, ye would think nought to fight through hell for him.

8. There are ſome, they think they would love Chriſt, but they lay on their love raſhly: They are not deliberate about the matter; and ſo they take their word again, like the ſeed that falls upon the ſtony ground: Therefore be well adviſed in your reſolution for Chriſt, that ſo ye may ſtand in the hour of temptation.

9. There are ſome that would love Chriſt, if they thought that he would love them. I ſay to ſuch, O! do not queſtion his love; for he offers it freely unto you, if ye would take it freely off his hand.

10. There are ſome (and I fear they are thin ſown) and they will love Chriſt whether he will love them or no; *Though he ſhould ſlay them, yet they will truſt in him*, Job xiii. 15. To ſuch I ſay, truly ye need not fear, for ye ſhall never get an ill turn out of Chriſt's hand for that.

Now, I ſhould have uſed ſome arguments or motives, to prevail with you to give your love to Chriſt, but, I think, if that which hath been ſaid, be not ſufficient, arguments or motives, to prevail with you, I know nothing will do it; and therefore I require, that ye give in this ſentence, *That he is your beloved, and he is your friend.*

PREFACE.

I THOUGHT in the forenoon, ye looked like folk, that through long faſting had loſt your ſtomachs; and ye know ſuch folk ſhould have ſome meat, to breed up an appetite again. O! that we could this day raiſe ſome appetite in your deſires after Chriſt. O ſirs! wherefore are ye come here this day! O! let it not be only to ſatisfy your eyes and ears, but for your ſpiritual good and advantage. O! my friends, if the preſence of a great king were coming in at the brae-

brae-head yonder amongſt you, would there not be a great ſtir and riſing amongſt you to give him way? And would not all your eyes be very attentive upon him? O ſirs! we expect the preſence of a great king here amongſt us, who hath promiſed to come, wherever he hath cauſed his name to be recorded; and therefore be compoſed with an attentive ear and frame, to hear what God the Lord will ſay. O! that king Chriſt would look down through the clouds, this day upon us! And O! that we might riſe, and let him have entry into our hearts. *Let us pray.*

SERMON XXXIX.

CANTICLES v. 16.

His mouth is moſt ſweet: Yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jeruſalem.

A REAL friend indeed is a very rare thing; and ye will go far before ye find one; and when ye have found him, O! how unconſtant and unſure is he to lippen to! like a looſe tooth, or foot out of joint, that dow thole nothing. But here ye will find a friend indeed, that will not beguile you; but ay the more ye lippen to him, ye will have the more encouragement to truſt in him. O! ye will find Chriſt ſuch a friend, that will do more for you than you can aſk or look for.

I ſhall not reſume what I have ſaid in the forenoon; only I named one doctrine from the words, and it was this. *That the love and lovelineſs of Chriſt, is the ground and foundation of our love to him.* And now I come to a ſecond doctrine from the words, which is this,

DOCT. II. *That Chriſt is a real friend.*

He uſeth no toom and empty compliments; for, as he ſaith John xv. 13, 14. *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.* Chriſt is that friend that ſticketh cloſer than a brother, Prov. xviii. 24. And if ye will take him for your friend, ye ſhall never want an act of friendſhip at his hand.

Now, in handling of this doctrine, I ſhall

I. Shew to you what a friend Chriſt is.

II. I

II. I ſhall ſhew you the ſeveral acts of friendſhip that he performeth to his people.

III. I ſhall cloſe with a word of uſe. And

I. To ſhew you what a friend Chriſt is. I cannot declare unto you particularly the matter as it is, only,

1. He is a ſure friend; without any diſſimulation or deceivery: For, it is his eſſential property, as he is God, *The God of truth, that he cannot lie*, Titus i. 2. He is a real friend in all his offers unto you.

2. He is a friend to you on the account of your good. There are ſome they will be friends to you, but what, I pray you, is the reaſon? It is even this, they have their own good and advantage before their eyes: For, *the rich man, he hath many friends, but the poor man is deſpiſed of his own neighbour*, Proverbs xiv. 20. But Chriſt is a friend, only upon the account of your good. And though ye were never ſo poor, he will never deſpiſe you, but befriend you, and make you rich, if ye will but take it off his hand.

3. He is a powerful friend. There may be ſome who would fain befriend you, but it is not in the power of their hands: But, O but Chriſt be a powerful friend, who can befriend you in your greateſt ſtraits! It is *he who cometh up from Edom, with died garments from Bozrah, traveling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, mighty to ſave*, Iſa. lxiii. 1. It is he whoſe eyes run to and fro, to ſhew himſelf mighty and powerful in behalf of thoſe that truſt in him: Some real friend may be in capacity to do you ſome good, but the good ye ſtand in need of, may be above his power to beſtow upon you; but Chriſt is a powerful friend, and is always in capacity to do you good in your greateſt ſtraits and difficulties: That cannot be ſaid of him, that Diogenes ſaid to Alexander; this Diogenes was a heathen philoſopher, who being in a tub, Alexander the Great (ſo called) coming to ſee him, aſked him what he would have from him, "That (ſaid he) which you cannot give me, "but now at preſent is holden from me;' which was the beams of the ſun. But Chriſt is ſuch a friend, as can give you all things, that are for your good.

4. Chriſt is a willing friend; for as he is powerful and able to do you good; ſo he is willing to beſtow his goodneſs upon you; as is demonſtrated by all his promiſes and invitations, that he hath made to ſinners. He calls *you that labour and are heavy laden*, under the ſenſe of ſin, *to come to him and he will give you reſt*, Matt. xi. 28. And his willingneſs to do you good, is confirmed by the experience of all the ſaints, who have ſtill found him, as good as his word.

5. Chriſt is a kind friend: Ye know a kind friend goes neareſt folk in greateſt ſtraits. O my friends! Chriſt is ſuch a friend, as will come near you, in all the ſad caſes you can

be in; when ye are in a ſick-bed, *he will make all your bed in your ſickneſs:* He will not ſtand at a diſtance from your ſore, for he is ſo kind, that he will come neareſt you in your greateſt ſtraits; for his ſympathy is ſuch, that *he that toucheth you, toucketh the apple of his eye.* And the apple of the eye, ye know, is the moſt tender member of the body, by which he ſheweth the ſympathy that he hath with his people, in all their ſinleſs infirmities; as in wearineſs, faintneſs and coldneſs, *&c.* He is ſo kind a friend, as that he takes a narrow account of all his friends conditions.

6. Chriſt is a faithful friend: (So to ſay) Chriſt's words are his deeds; for he never promiſes a good turn to any, and beguiles them; yea, nothing can incapacitate him from anſwering his friends neceſſities. It cannot be ſaid of him, what Solomon ſays of putting *Confidence in an unfaithful man, in time of trouble, that is like a broken tooth, or a foot out of joint,* Prov. xxv. 19. for the more ye truſt in ſuch, the more ye are beguiled: But the more ye lean upon Chriſt, the more ye will find of his faithfulneſs: Therefore, *caſt your burden upon him, and he will ſuſtain you.* If ye will lay yourſelves and your burden upon him, he ſhall carry you and it both.

7. Chriſt is a conſtant friend: There is no change or alteration in him, that can alter his reſpect to you. Rich men may alter their reſpect, as your condition in the world ebbs or flows; and great men their reſpect is alterable, but Chriſt is a conſtant friend, who will abide with you in your greateſt need. He is not like other friends, who are unconſtant and uncertain, in their own willingneſs and ability, in doing acts of friendſhip; for he is always willing; and it is always in the power of his hand to do you good. Therefore, my dear friends, take him as your friend, your beſt friend; for the friendſhip of moſt men is little worth; for it is very unconſtant and uncertain: For, there were ſome the laſt year, that teſtified friendſhip, who, this year, their friendſhip is quite altered; ſo that they openly teſtify againſt civil converſe with us. But O ſirs! Chriſt is a conſtant friend; and whom he once befriends, he befriends to the end. Therefore, I beſeech you take him for your friend, for he will befriend you in your greateſt ſtraits; for *happy are ye when ye ſuffer and are reproached for the name of Chriſt. For then the ſpirit of glory, and of God reſteth upon you,* 1 Pet. iv. 14. So then, if ye would take him for a friend, ye ſhould never want a friend: He is ſuch a friend as will give health to you in your ſickneſs, yea, he is ſuch a friend, as *will deliver you in ſix troubles; yea, in ſeven, there ſhall no evil touch you,* Job. v. 19. for, *when ye paſs through the waters, he will be with you; and thro' the rivers, they ſhall not overflow you: When ye walk through the fire ye ſhall not be burnt; neither ſhall the flame kindle upon you,* Iſa.

xliii.

xliii. 2. Now, my dear friends take him for your friend, and ſay of him, as the ſpouſe doth here, *This is my beloved, and this is my friend.*

II. The ſecond thing that I am to ſpeak to from the doctrine, is, to ſhew you the ſeveral acts of friendſhip, that Chriſt performeth to his friends; the which, though all the powers in heaven and earth, ſhould join all their power in one, to do you acts of friendſhip; they could not do theſe acts of friendſhip which Chriſt doth. And,

1. The firſt act of friendſhip which Chriſt hath done, or will do to all his friends, is the taking away a burden of ſin and wrath from them. For, *he who knew no ſin, was made the ſinner*, by imputation, *that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. v. 21. Ye know ſirs, that if ye were preſt under a heavy burden, heavier than ye were able to bear, ye would count him a friend, that would relieve you of it; Chriſt, he hath taken on a heavier burden off your necks, than the weight of all theſe mountains that are about us; yea, the reprobates in the great day of judgment, would rather bear the weight of mountains, than the preſence of the Lamb, who is to judge them; then, hath not Chriſt beſtowed a great act of friendſhip upon you, who are his friends, who hath taken ſuch a burden from you? O my friends! if ye found the weight thereof, as they did, who are ſpoken of, Acts ii. 37. who were *pricked in their heart, and ſaid unto Peter, and to the reſt of the apoſtles, men and brethren, what ſhall we do?* ye would count it an act of friendſhip indeed.

2. The ſecond act of friendſhip that Chriſt will do unto you, is this, he will help you in your ſpiritual warfare, againſt your ſpiritual enemies: He will ſubdue your enemies. He muſt have the crown and the victory; for, ye muſt give him all the praiſe of your victory, which ye obtain through him. You find that Joab, when he was fighting againſt Rabbah, ſends for king David, to come and fight againſt the city, and take it. *leſt I* (ſaith he) *take the city, and it be called by my name*, 2 Sam. xii. 26, 27, 28. I think this was the greateſt act of loyalty, that ever Joab did to David, in ſending for him, only that the praiſe of the victory might be aſcribed unto unto him. So my friends, ye have your Rabbahs to beſiege; your ſtrong corruptions, and your unmortified luſts, and if ye deſire to have the victory over them, ye muſt ſend for king Chriſt, and by him take in the city, and obtain the victory; for, ye will never prevail againſt any of theſe enemies without him: Therefore, if ye deſire to be loyal to Chriſt, employ him to help you, and let him have all the praiſe. O ſirs! Chriſt is ſuch a friend, as will rid and deliver you out of the multitude of troubles, and all ſpiritual evils: The ſight whereof made Paul to cry out, *O wretched man that I am!*

who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? Rom. vii. 24. But afterwards he is made to ſay, *Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Cor. xv. 57. O ſirs! if ye be Chriſtians, ye will count it no ſmall act of friendſhip, to be helped forward in the exerciſe of holineſs. A true believer will count ſanctification, as great a benefit as juſtification. My friends, holineſs carries its reward in its boſom. If ye will employ Chriſt, he will do you that kind act of friendſhip, to ſubdue your ſpiritual enemies, and to give you the victory, only let him have the praiſe.

3. The third act of friendſhip that Chriſt will do for his friends, is this, he will protect you from all evils, both from ſpiritual evils and temporal evils Temporal evils ſhall not harm you; for, he hath given you his word, that they ſhall not harm you, but ſhall turn to your own advantage: For, who can go through fire, and be not burned thereby, but theſe who have his preſence with them? O ſirs! ye need not fear, for he will protect you through fire and water, ſo that the flame ſhall not kindle upon you, nor the floods overflow, nor drown you: And when ye are in ſtraits, the Lord will point out a way for you to eſcape.

4. The fourth act of friendſhip that Chriſt will perform to you that are his friends, is this, he will provide for you: He will ſupply all your wants, both ſpiritual and temporal. If ye be deſirous to ſeek after the means of ſpiritual life, ye ſhall not want it; for, *when the poor and needy ſeek water, and there is none, and their tongues faileth for thirſt, I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Iſrael will not forſake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midſt of the vallies: I will make the wilderneſs a pool of water, and the dry land ſprings of water*, Iſa. xli. 17, 18. And, for your temporal wants, they ſhall be ſupplied; for, ye ſhall not want neither meat nor drink that is for your welfare. Pſal. xxxiv. 10 *The young lions do lack and ſuffer hunger, but they that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* In the ſixth of Matthew, the Lord Jeſus takes much pains to remove your unbelief, concerning your neceſſary proviſion; for, ſaith he, ver. 25. "Therefore I ſay unto you, take no thought for your life, "what ye ſhall eat, or what ye ſhall drink; nor yet for your "body, what ye ſhall put on: Is not the life more than "meat, and the body than raiment? ver. 26. Behold the "fowls of the air, for they ſow not; neither do they reap, "nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth "them: Are not ye much better than they?" O ſirs! will ye take Chriſt for your friend, and then ye need not fear, but ye ſhall be provided for: Therefore we ought to take joyfully the ſpoiling of our goods, when he calls for them at our hands; for, he will ſtill abundantly provide for us, what

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he ſees we ſtand in need of. O my friends! it is your unbelief that makes many of you turn aſide to crooked ways. Ye are doubtful of his providence to you, and that makes many to take of their goods, which he beſtowed on them, and give them to his enemies, to buy ſwords to kill his friends with. O! it had been better for you, that ye had never had theſe goods, than beſtow them upon his enemies: The reaſon is this (ſay ye) we may leave houſe, and all, if we do not pay the ceſs: And we ſee no other way for our proviſion, without paying of it. But, O friends! will ye take Chriſt for your friend, and ye need not fear: Do not diſtruſt his providence. We may tell of many in this day, who have not paid ceſſes, that have been provided for. Well then, in whatever ſtate any of you have been, who have ſuffered in theſe years by-gone, Chriſt hath hitherto provided for you, and he will do it ſtill, if ye abide faithful for him, although ye cannot always ſee the airth from whence your proviſion is coming. And, O my friends! if any of you would betake yourſelves to this way, ye ſhall have more peace of conſcience than ye have, though ye ſhould be caſt forth at a dyke-ſide.

5. The fifth act of Chriſt's friendſhip that he will perform for you, is this, *he will make all things work together for your good:* All that he tryſts you with ſhall be ordered for your good. If proſperity be for your good, he will give you that: But if he ſee that other diſpenſations be more for your good, then he will give you them: *For who ſhall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good.* If we ſhall take Chriſt for our friend, he will make us gainers for all the loſs that we ſuſtain in the world; for *our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, they work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory.*

6. The ſixth act of Chriſt's friendſhip that he performeth for us, is this, his correcting of us, Heb. xii. 6, 7. *For whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth; and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth. If ye endure chaſtning, God dealeth with you as with ſons.* So, I ſay, the Lord's chaſtnings are acts of his friendſhip, and tokens of his love to us.

(1.) In reference to his purpoſe, for which he doth them; for, all his corrections are to bring back the ſoul from the pit. And though the backſide of correction may ſeem grievous to look to, yet when we look to the inſide thereof, it yields the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs.

(2.) Chriſt's corrections are friendly as to their meaſure; for, we meet with infinitely leſs than we deſerve from his hand; for we have deſerved God's heavy wrath and curſe, both here and hereafter.

(3.) Chriſt's corrections are friendly in reſpect of the effects that he worketh by them; which ye may ſee, Pſal. cxix. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray; but now I have kept thy word.* The Lord hath made affliction the means of peo-

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ple's converſion, Hoſ. v. 15. *In their affliction they will ſeek me early.* The Lord made Manaſſeh's affliction a mean of his converſion. The Lord oft-times makes uſe of this as phyſic, for healing of his people from their ſin, and preventing of their miſery. He keeps ſome in a mean condition in the world, to hide pride from their eyes; and he gives ſome a ſmall taſting of hell in their conſcience here, that they may find heaven the ſweeter hereafter. Others are very hard beſtead in the world, that they may be chaſed out of it to Chriſt. So then, we may ſee that Chriſt's corrections are acts of friendſhip, that he performeth to his people, both in reſpect of his purpoſes, and in reſpect of the effects that he produced thereby.

7. The ſeventh act of Chriſt's friendſhip that he performeth to his people, is his leading of them; for he is given *a leader to the people.* O ſirs! Chriſt not only furniſheth and ſtrengthneth inſtruments for the leading of his people, but ſometimes he leads them immediately himſelf, by his word and ſpirit Therefore my dear friends, will ye take Chriſt for your friend, and he will guide you unto all truth? For he will give us his word before us, and without us, to guide us, and his ſpirit within us, to lead us; which is the voice behind us, ſaying, *This is the way walk ye in it*, Iſa. xxx. 21. O ſirs! if ye underſtood the worth of the Bible, ye would count it an act of friendſhip indeed, that it is continued yet with us, and amongſt us unto this day: And who knows, but it may come to that, that a Bible may be a rare thing amongſt us? However, if it come to that, I hope and am confident, that that time ſhall not be long. Now, if we deſire to have that ſtroke prevented, we ſhould make much uſe of it while we have it, and highly prize the worth of it. There was a very rich young gentleman, who was coming home from other countries, having a ſhip loaden with fine wares, who, when they were not far from land, a leek ſtruck up in the ſhip, and the young man ſeeing the ſhip begin to ſink, he caſt off all his cloaths, only he took a ſmall New Teſtament, and bound it in a napkin about his neck, and ſo throws himſelf into the ſea, to ſwim, if poſſibly he might win to land, and ſo he was preſerved. He ſhewed more reſpect to the ſmall New Teſtament than to all the ſilver and gold that was in the ſhip: So, I ſay to you, have great reſpect to the word of God; for in it is contained the contract betwixt Chriſt and the ſpouſe: By it God manifeſts his will unto us; in it we have the promiſe of his Spirit, to lead us, and to make his word plain and eaſy to us. The word of God is the lanthorn, and his Spirit is the candle of the lanthorn, that giveth light. Therefore, I ſay, his word and ſpirit muſt always go together for our profiting, for as an empty lanthorn will give no

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light, ſo his word, without his ſpirit, will not enlighten our dark minds; neither will one carry a candle without a lanthorn in a windy night, but it will ſoon be blown out: So, I ſay, that ſpirit that is not accompanied with the word of God, will not abide the wind of God's trial; ſo, I ſay, ye muſt have the word and ſpirit to lead you; and ye ſhall not want that, if you take Chriſt to be your friend.

8. The eight act of Chriſt's friendſhip is this, he will tell you much of his mind. Near friends will let out much of their minds to others, and ſo will Chriſt do to you, if ye take him for your friend: For ſaith he, John xv. 15. "Hence-"forth I call you not ſervants; for the ſervant knoweth not "what the Lord doth; but I have called you friends; for "all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made "known unto you.' And, Pſalm xxv. 14. "The ſecret of "the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will ſhew them "his covenant." And not only will he ſhew you your ſtanding intereſt in him; but he will alſo tell you what he is about to do in other places about you; as ye may ſee he did to Abraham his friend, Gen. xviii 17. "And the Lord ſaid, "ſhall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do." O my friends! if we were making Chriſt our friend, we needed not be in the dark in many things, as we are; for he would clear our duty to us.

9. The ninth act of Chriſt's friendſhip that he will perform to you, (if ye be his) is this *he will be your advocate with the Father:* He will plead your cauſe, and carry the day; ſo that we may ſay, as in Jer. xvii. 7. "Bleſſed is the man that "truſteth in the Lord, and whoſe hope the Lord is" Ye know it is ſaid, *A friend in court, is better than a penny in the purſe.* And now, O friends, we have a friend up at the court of heaven, who will receive all the bills off our hands, and plead our cauſe; who is not there as a ſupplicant, but is there as a party; and therefore he will carry the day. Therefore, let papiſts pray to ſaints or angels, or other creatures as they will, but they ſhall not get a hearing. But we may be ſure to be heard in and through Jeſus Chriſt, who is our advocate with the Father, and will ſee our wrongs redreſſed. Zech. i. 15, 16. "And I am ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen "that are at eaſe: For I was but a little diſpleaſed, and they "helped forward the affliction. Therefore, thus ſaith the "Lord, I am returned to Jeruſalem with mercies: My houſe "ſhall be built in it, ſaith the Lord of hoſts" Chriſt will order aright all your concernments; therefore, ſay ye, *This is my beloved and this is my friend.*

10. The tenth act of friendſhip that Chriſt will perform to you, is this, he will avenge you of your enemies, Zech. ii. 8, 9. "For thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts, After the glory hath he

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"ſent me unto the nations which ſpoiled you; for he that "toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye: For behold "I will ſhake mine hand upon them, and they ſhall be a ſpoil "to their ſervants." We look that the Lord ſhould eaſe his people, work, and intereſt by the very hands that brought them low: But look not that any of the great men, that have gone alongſt with the ſins of the time, in wronging of his people, and ſhedding of their blood, ſhall be honoured with it: But Chriſt will ſee juſtice execute upon them to the full, who have delighted in ſhedding of blood; they ſhall get blood in great meaſure, and it ſhall be ſeen, that the Lord ſhall be the doer of it.

11. The eleventh act of Chriſt's friendſhip, that he performeth to you that are his friends, is, the many ſweet embracements that he beſtows, and will beſtow upon you. He will kiſs you with the kiſſes of his mouth: He will let you find the ſweet breath of his mouth to comfort and refreſh you: He will ſay unto you, *Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.* Chriſt will let much of his love and kindneſs out to you; and therefore I would not have you to queſtion his love to you, becauſe of his ſeeming abſence from you; for he will not always bide at a diſtance from you: Therefore take him to be your friend, and he will beſtow much of his love upon you.

12. The twelfth act of Chriſt's friendſhip that he will perform to you who are his friends, is this, he will perfect you at your death. He will ſend his angels poſt from heaven, to carry you home to your Father's houſe, as he did Lazarus; that poor man died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's boſom. O my friends! ye ſhall go to heaven with the victory, and ſpoil of all your enemies: For the worſt that enemies can do to you, is, but to perfect your happineſs; and make you perfectly in capacity for his ſervice: And the wrong and injury that enemies do to you, it will return upon themſelves. Their own miſchief ſhall return upon their own heads; and you, by death, ſhall be perfectly freed of all incapacities and troubles, that ye are troubled with in the world. Chriſt ſhall make death to perfect your happineſs; though to the wicked it ſhall be the beginning of their miſery, which is the eternal ſeparation of them from the preſence of the Lamb. Now, ſirs, is not this a kind act of friendſhip, that Chriſt will perfect your happineſs at death? O then! ſay. *This is my beloved and this is my friend.*

13. The thirteenth act of Chriſt's friendſhip, that he will perform to you his friends, is this, when he comes again at the great day of judgment, ye ſhall be firſt raiſed and ſet upon Chriſt's right hand; for, *the dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt.* Then ye ſhall be ſet down to judge the wicked; and ſhall ſay, *A-*

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men, to the righteous and juſt ſentence of condemnation, that ſhall be paſt againſt the reprobate, angels and men, *Depart ye curſed, to a curſed place, to everlaſting torments, prepared for the devil and his angels.* And theſe ſhall go away with a ſhriek and a noiſe. Now, O ſirs! is not this a kind act of friendſhip indeed, that Chriſt will perform to you, who ſhall free you of all that miſery, that reprobates muſt endure to all eternity, and ſet you down with himſelf to judge the wicked? Then be perſuaded to take him for your beloved, and your friend.

14. The fourteenth act of Chriſt's friendſhip, that he will perform to you his friends, is this, he will crown your happineſs with the eternal enjoyment of his preſence. O my friends! your crowns ſhall not wax old, and your palms of triumph ſhall not wallow in your hands; they ſhall always flouriſh; ye *ſhall be made pillars in the temple of your God, and ſhall go no more out.* Your eternal enjoyment of God ſhall be your element, which ye ſhall for ever delight in; and this will be to praiſe and admire his love: *For eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive, the things that the Lord hath prepared for them that love him.* O then, ſirs! what think ye of Chriſt? Will ye not, at this time, ſay, that he is your beloved and your friend? We cannot reckon over to you all the ſeveral acts of friendſhip, that Chriſt performeth for his friends: Only we recommend to you, the reading of his bleſſed word, and then ye will ſee the ſeveral acts of friendſhip, that Chriſt performeth for his friends, and that he hath performed to us, and for us: And this we may ſay, happy are all theſe that take him for their friend. O give your conſent to become his friends, and accept of him for your friend. I leave this offer at your door, he is willing to befriend you, if ye will come into an eſtate of friendſhip with him. O come, come and take his offer off his hand; ſay not that ye have ſo long continued in ſin, that ye know not if he will befriend you now; for, if ye will come to him he will yet befriend you. Therefore, for the Lord's ſake, put not away ſuch an offer, but take it in the preſent time; for ye know not if ever ye ſhall have an offer again: And if ye will not take his offer off his hand this day, I ſhall be a witneſs againſt you in the great day of judgment, that this day the Sun of Righteouſneſs offered himſelf to be your friend, and ye have made light of the offer; yea, the hills and mountains about us ſhall be witneſſes; and the heaven that is above our heads ſhall be a witneſs, that ye had Chriſt in your offer ſuch a day, in ſuch a place: Therefore, my dear friends, ſay that he is your beloved, and that he is your friend.

III. The laſt thing propoſed to be ſpoken to, was a word of uſe. And it is this, that if ye have taken Chriſt to be your friend, ſee then that ye behave yourſelves towards him as friends. And in doing this,

1. Ye muſt endeavour to keep his commandments; for he ſaith, John xv. 14. *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.* What way ſhall we be diſtinguiſhed from his enemies, if it be not in this, that we keep his commandments? O my friends! diſplay a banner for truth: If ye would behave as friends, ye muſt keep his laws in high eſtimation in your hearts; and ye muſt be very fearful to offend him: Ye know one would be very loath to offend a dear friend: And if ye offend Chriſt ye offend a real friend: Therefore, ſtudy how ye may not offend or diſpleaſe him.

2. Ye muſt keep up intimate converſe and fellowſhip with Chriſt: For, ſaith the apoſtle John, 1 John i. 3. *Truly our fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* By all means we ought to endeavour to keep up fellowſhip with Chriſt. And truly, my friends, they are to be pitied who are ignorant of Chriſt's preſence, of his abſence from the ſoul; for ſuch cannot behave towards him as friends. For friends always long when they are abſent from each other, and delight much in other company. O my friends! ye ſhould delight much in Chriſt's company. Mind his carriage toward you, and ſee if ye have walked anſwerable to his carriage toward you. O ſirs! ye muſt turn away your eyes from viewing vanity. Ye muſt not converſe with other lovers, otherwiſe ye do not behave towards him as friends.

3. If ye deſire to behave towards Chriſt as friends, ye muſt manifeſt it, by being zealous for his truths in your place and ſtation. Ye muſt ſtudy always to be zealouſly affected in that good matter of owning his cauſe. Alas! alas! my friends, Chriſt's truth ſuffers wrongs and injuries from all hands; for open enemies they wrong his truth, by open perſecution into the death. And we, by our unanſwerable converſation to our profeſſion, do him more wrong; and alſo by our defection, indifferency, and lukewarmneſs in the matters wherein his glory is concerned; For our public reſolutions did more wrong and injury to the truth, than open enemies could have done, if this had not been yielded unto. For by conſenting to the bringing in of malignants into places of power and truſt, they provoked the Lord to make theſe malignants to be pricks in our eyes, and thorns in our ſides, to vex us in the land wherein we dwell, Numb. xxxiii. 55. And even now, what indignity is done to Chriſt, by ſuffering the banner of his truth to ly upon the ground. O ſirs! truth is fallen in the ſtreets; for there are ſome ſo lukewarm, that they will grant a toleration for us, and all ſorts of folk, to live together

gether with contentment; whereas, the Lord hath forbiden to ſet any altar by his altar: Yea, he hath commanded to deſtroy their altars, and break down their images, Deut. vii. 5. So, toleration of falſe religion, will never do good, but much evil. Therefore as we deſire to carry as friends to Chriſt, we muſt ſet to, with tooth and nail (ſo to ſpeak) to oppoſe this courſe of defection.

(4) If we would behave as friends to Chriſt, we muſt not deſert him, when his back is at the wall: When his truth is moſt low, then we ſhould be moſt zealous for holding it up. The more that adverſaries labour to mar his truth, the more we ſhould labour to advance his truth. It is ſaid of Levi, that he ſaw not his Father nor his mother; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor know his own children in the day of the plague, Deut. xxxiii. 9. So we ſhould be impartial in giving free and faithful warning againſt all ſins, in all perſons though never ſo dear unto us, and eſpecially when there are ſome, who are endeavouring to have mixed through other, papiſts, proteſtants, malignants, and ſectarians, of all ſorts. O ſirs! be ſtedfaſt in the truth: We have a little ſiſter, let us go on, and act for our ſiſter; let us go in before the great monarch of heaven and earth, and mourn before him for our ſin, that hath brought us low this day, and ſet up our enemies: And let us uſe all our moyan with that great king at the throne of grace, that our enemies may never enjoy a peaceable poſſeſſion of our true preſbyterian rights; and let us never give our conſent to live peaceably without them.

5. If ye would behave as friends to Chriſt, ye muſt not prig with him, for what he hath called for at your hands: Freely ye have received at his hands, and freely ye muſt give it to him again, when he calls for it. Whatever it be that he calls for, as a teſtimony of your love to him and his truth, be it your name or reputation in the world; ye muſt, when his truth call for it give it freely. O my friends! lay your gear and all that you have at his feet: Reſolve upon reproaches and infamy, when he calls you to it, for a witneſs to his truth. And truly we are miſrepreſented by ſome, who ſay that we are againſt the calling of miniſters to labour in the Lord's vineyard: Wo unto us if the caſe were ſo: But as Joab ſaid, in another caſe to the wiſe woman of Abel, 2 Sam. xx. 21. *The matter is not ſo, but a man of mount Ephraim (Sheba the ſon of Bichri by name) hath lift up his hand againſt the king, even againſt David; deliver him only, and I will depart from the city*, ſo, I ſay, It is theſe that have made defection in theſe days, and thereby brought themſelves under public ſcandal, and will not acknowledge the ſame, that are to be blamed: For it is neceſſary that theſe acknowledge their of-

fences, and evidence their repentance before we call them: For if we ſhould conſent to any other way, we ſhould thereby throw down all that we have been building. But, I ſay, let the world ſay as much evil of us as they will, and let any traduce us as much as they like, let us lay all at Chriſt's feet, when his truth calls for it. O my friends! lay your gear and all that ye have at Chriſt's feet; and that which ye give to him, take it not again, for we, in baptiſm, have given away ourſelves to him, and to be for his ſervice; and ſo have proclaimed open war againſt the devil, the world, and our corruptions. And now, when we take that gear which he hath beſtowed upon us, and beſtows it upon his enemies, to hold up their power againſt God's intereſt in the world, is not this a taking from God, and a breach of our baptiſmal vows? Now there are ſome who will ſay, We thought little of our ſuffering, as long as a clat of gear would have done the turn: But when ye give them your gear, it is taken from God, and given to his enemies, and therefore is your ſin, and not cleanly ſuffering: But when the enemies take it from you, that is your ſuffering. And ye muſt lay your account, not only with the loſs of your gear, when his truth calls for a teſtimony, but ye muſt quit all your relations; ye muſt quit with wife and children; father, mother, ſiſter, and brother, and lay all at Chriſt's feet; for ye muſt ſet your affections upon him above all that you have; yea, and above your own lives, and lay your account with ſudden and ſharp death. O my friends! do not prig with him, for he will not prig with you, but will freely give you all things you ſtand in need of. O therefore ſpeak well of him; when ye hear his name reproached, lend in a word for him; and ſpeak well of his truths. Praiſe him for his goodneſs, for he is praiſe-worthy, who is the chief among ten thouſand, and the altogether lovely one. Therefore to him who is the beloved of his ſpouſe, we deſire to give praiſe.

PREFACE.

PREFACE.

THE great end of prefacing is to awaken up the hearers attention, and prepare them for the ſervice. O! ye are a congregation that ſtand in great need of this; and what ſhall be ſaid to you for this end? What would you now think, if Jeſus Chriſt were coming among you to ſeal your condemnation, and to cloſe quite the door of mercy, and were ſetting up his throne in the clouds, and arraigning you before his tribunal, and in judging you, and in paſſing that ſentence upon you, *Depart from me ye curſed, into hell's fire?* What would ye think, upon the other hand, if Chriſt were coming to ſeal your ſalvation, to give your hearts to cloſe with the terms of the covenant, giving you the ſeal of faith, and to ſet you upon his right hand, to paſs the ſentence of abſolution and confirmation upon you? This ye are to conſider. There is, in the goſpel, the way of life, and the way of death; there is life to the accepters and receivers, and death to all rejecters and deſpiſers; and it is a double death they are liable unto. (1.) As rebels and tranſgreſſors of the law. (2.) As rejecters and deſpiſers of the goſpel; ſo you ſhall be twice made liable to death: Therefore, *it ſhall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for you.* It is not a matter of ſmall concernment that you are now about, if rightly conſidered: For, in the goſpel, ye ſhall get one of theſe two, either your condemnation, or your ſalvation ſealed: The goſpel to many is a ſtumbling block, and fooliſhneſs; but to them that believe, the power of God unto ſalvation. Will you think on this? What will be the fruit and conſequence of the goſpel, to ſome this night? They will get their ſalvation ſealed: But the fruit and conſequence of it to many of you will be, ye will get your damnation ſealed: Wherefore, it had been telling many of you that ye had never heard the goſpel, nor aſſembled yourſelves here this night.

Now I ſhall ſpeak a word to two or three ſorts of folk, and leave it. And,

1. To you that are ſtrangers to God, whether you be profeſſors or not, who are not brought near to God; you are under the wrath of God, and the ſentence and curſe of the law: You are hanging above hell by the ſmall thread of your life; and O how ſoon may that be cut! and then you will fall down to the bottom: I ſay unto you, will ye hear the

goſpel

goſpel ſound, and receive it! it is of your everlaſting concernment, if you were ſenſible to look upon it.

2. You that have not ſought the Lord; you that have not uſed means, folk that prays not: O! conſider what caſe ye are in, and ſet about the ſeeking of the Lord; for, you are encouraged to it by this; if ye ſeek the Lord, ye ſhall find him; but there is nothing of this to folk that is not uſing of means; and ye may not ſatisfy yourſelf with the formal uſing of means, but fall to and ſeek God in ſincerity, and do not think that it is a bondage; ye will find meikle peace in the doing of it, and unſpeakable advantage. Alas! many do ſcar at religion; they think it a hard, rough, unpleaſant work; and if they fall about it, then they muſt give up with their carnal pleaſures: But David could ſay, he found more pleaſure therein *than they did in their corn and their wine.*

3. But a third ſort of folk is, you that have turned back from the Lord; O! will you turn again? Let me ſpeak to you in the words of the prophet Hoſea, *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord,* Hoſ. xiv. 2. What made you turn back from following the Lord, for his yoke is eaſy, and his burden is light? O! return, return ſtrangers; return, and he will heal your backſlidings.

4. I would ſay this to you that are Chriſtians; but, alas! I have a few to ſpeak to, you cannot but be ſenſible of the withholding the influences of the Lord's Spirit: O will ye cry to him that he would ſhed down this abundantly among you? O! will ye give him no reſt till his dew ly on your branches? O! cry, *Awake, O north wind, and come thou ſouth, and blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out; Let my beloved come into his garden. and eat his pleaſant fruit.*

SERMON XL.

CANTICLES iv. 16.

Awake, O north wind, and come thou ſouth, blow upon my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out: Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruit.

I KNOW not for you that are Chriſtians a word in all the ſcripture more ſuitable for your time than this: I know not a prayer more pertinent for you than this, *Awake, O north*

north wind, and come thou ſouth, and blow upon my garden that the ſpices thereof may flow out.

In the foregoing part of the chapter, Chriſt was very large in commending the ſpouſe. And now in the words that we have read, ſhe puts up her prayers in two ſuits: In the firſt ſuit, there is two things:

1. The things ſought, and that is, *the north and ſouth wind to awake and come.*

2. The end wherefore it is ſought, and that is, *that the ſpices may flow out.*

Now, by wind is underſtood, the ſpirit of the Lord, which is clear by *Ezekiel's propheſying to the dry bones*, Ezek xxxvii. 9. The ſpirit of the Lord is compared to wind for ſeveral reaſons: For, 1. The wind is of a purifying nature, even ſo is the ſpirit of the Lord, in its efficacious working. 2. The wind is of a cooling nature, even ſo the ſpirit of the Lord in his gracious working, doth cool and quench the ſcorching heat of all temptations. (3.) Where the wind is commanded to breath upon them. Now the wind is very refreſhing, and ſo is the ſpirit. (4.) The wind is very fructifying, and maketh fruitful, and ſo doth the ſpirit of the Lord. (5.) The ſpirit of the Lord is compared to wind, becauſe of the manner of working whereby it works: For, conſider the wind, we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goes: Even ſo is the ſpirit: For though we feel the motion of the wind when it blows, yet we know not from whence it comes: Even ſo is the working of the ſpirit.

Now by north and ſouth wind, is ſignified the ſame ſpirit, but the different ways of working: For the north wind is a ſharp nipping wind; and the ſouth wind, is a cooling refreſhing wind: And by *awake and come*, doth ſignify and note, the operations and working thereof: The thing it works upon, is the garden: So believers have a talent committed to them; a garden called her garden, becauſe it was committed to her keeping; ſhe herſelf abounding with graces; as a garden doth with plants and flowers.

2. The end wherefore ſhe prays, is that ſhe may be fruitful, that her *fruits and ſpices may flow out.*

The ſecond ſuit is, *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant fruits.* The garden is called his garden, and the fruits are called his fruits; We ſhall ſhew the reaſon afterwards, why they are called his; and we ſhall now, after this brief explanation of the words, come to ſome doctrines from them.

DOCT. I. *That although believers have always grace, yet not in exerciſe; but are ſometimes in a dull heavy, and fruitleſs frame and diſpoſition.*

1. It is clear from the text; for it is the ſpouſe that puts up this

this ſuit here; and ſhe was a garden that had fruit and ſpices but then not in growth. But the point is likewiſe clear from the xlii. Pſalm. The pſalmiſt there in a gracious ſtate, but had it not in exerciſe; and all that he could win to, was, even to remember former mercies; *O my God, my ſoul is caſt down in me, therefore I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, and from the hill of Mizer.* Therefore he doth reprehend himſelf, and therefore he was thirſting for God: He was in a dead, dull frame, and therefore he crys unto God. We may ſee it likewiſe in the ſpouſe's caſe, chap. v. 3. She was in a fruitleſs and heavy frame, and dull diſpoſition; for, when Chriſt was calling at her door, ſhe returns this anſwer, *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them?* This doctrine, I need not ſtand to prove, but in ſpeaking to it, to lead to the application, I ſhall,

I. Shew you ſome difference betwixt Chriſtians indiſpoſition by being in a fruitleſs frame, and them that are incapacitate, by being in a ſtate of nature; for, the condition of folk in nature, they have not the grace of God in them, neither in habit, nor in exerciſe; but theſe in a dull frame, have grace in habit, but not in exerciſe.

II. I ſhall ſpeak to ſome things that doth ordinarily procure fruitleſs frames, and heavy and dull diſpoſitions: And then.

III. Come to the application.

I. Now for the difference between them that are dead, and them that are only dull, for we call theſe dead, who are in a ſtate of nature.

1. The firſt is this, thoſe that are only dull and not dead, they have a ſenſe of it; but thoſe that are dead, they have no ſenſe of it: But Chriſtians, in their dull diſpoſition, have a ſenſe of it, and that ſpeaks out ſome life; for, the ſenſe of feeling doth argue ſome actings, and exerciſe of life.

2. A ſecond difference is this, perſons that are dull and not dead, they loath themſelves, becauſe of their dulneſs, and are burdened with it, becauſe they are in that which is not their element; but thoſe in nature, are not burdened, becauſe they are in that which is their element: For that which is a perſon's element does not burden them; though the whole element were above you, yet it would not burden you. Put a man in the bottom of the ſea, he will not be burdened with the water, becauſe he is in the element of the water; but put a ſmall quantity of water in a veſſel, and lay it on him when he is on the land, it will burden him, becauſe he is then in the element of the air.

3. A third difference is this, Chriſtians in their fruitleſs frame and indiſpoſition, they will remember that it hath ſometimes been better with them: But they in nature have not that

that to look back unto: As in Pſalm xlii. 11. *Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him.*

4. A fourth difference, is this, Chriſtians in their fruitleſs dull frame, they will have a longing for a fruitful frame; but the man in nature cannot have theſe longings. David could ſay, *O! when wilt thou come in kindneſs unto me?* They in nature know not what it is to have a fruitful frame; therefore they cannot long for it; they ſee not the need they have of it; and therefore though they want them, yet they do not miſs them. But,

5. This may be given as a difference, dead folk they want them, but Chriſtians, though dull, they miſs them, and they ſee that they want them, and have need of them, and that when they want them they are ſad: For, a man, though he want wings, yet he doth not miſs them: Fowls, they would miſs them: Fiſhes would miſs their fins: Fowls do not miſs them, becauſe they need them not, and it is not their element; even ſo, as long as a man is in the ſtate of nature, he ſees no need that he hath of a fruitful frame, and therefore he doth not miſs it.

6. Chiſtians in their dull and dead condition, they will be uſing means of livelineſs, that they may be recovered out of that dull frame; but, I ſay not, but many dead in nature may and do uſe means, but not for that end that they may be enlivened: And that is even good, that Chriſtians do not leave off the uſing means: For, if they cannot pray, then they will chatter like a crane, like Hezekiah; but, what if they cannot chatter like a crane? Then they will groan; but, what if they cannot groan? Then they will ſigh; but, what if they cannot ſigh? Then they will ſay as David ſaid, *All that I deſire is before thee.* However, this we ſay, that wherever grace is, the perſon that hath it, will be uſing ſome means or other for livelineſs.

Now try yourſelves by theſe things, whether ye be in the ſtate of nature, and altogether dead, or if ye be in a dull and fruitleſs frame. And now, ſirs, what think ye of your fruitleſs condition. O! I fear that many of you are not dull, but dead, and in a ſtate of nature.

II. A ſecond thing to be ſpoken to from this doctrine is, to ſhew you ſome things that do ordinarily procure heavy and dull diſpoſitions, and are the cauſes of the Lord's hiding of his face. O! is it not your great queſtion, to know wherefore the Lord hides his face, and doth not ſend down the influences of his ſpirit? I will then ſhew you ſome things that are the cauſes of this. And,

1. The falling into ſome groſs ſin or other; this is the cauſe of very great dullneſs, and this procures a deſerted condition. We ſee this confirmed by David's ſad experience, after his a-

dultery, his lips were cloſed. There is little wonder though the influences of the Lord's ſpirit be withholden from you, O ſinners! O! there are ſome of you guilty of great ſins that the world knows not of; and ſome of you guilty of great ſins that the world knows of; but whether the world knows of them or not, God knows of them; and they are as a wall and mountain betwixt you and God.

2. And a ſecond procuring cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face, is the neglecting of duty, and of uſing means that God hath appointed in his word. Think you it any wonder that you are dull when ye neglect your duty? *It is the hand of the diligent that maketh rich.* It is no wonder that ſocieties be lifeleſs, and that families be lifeleſs, there is ſo little uſing of means that ye may be enlivened.

3. And a third procuring cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face, is the formal performing of duty; for their are many that do neglect duty; and others, though they perform duty, yet they do it but very formally, and the out-ſide is moſt regarded in performing of it; and ſo it is no wonder though the Lord hide his face, becauſe of your formality.

4. A fourth procuring cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face is your neglecting to depend upon him for life. This is no ſmall cauſe; for he is the fountain of life, and when you do not depend upon him for it, how can ye have it? O! dependency, ſirs! labour to know what it is. I know not what to compare it to, to make you underſtand it: It is like an empty veſſel ſet out to keep the falling rain; or it is like an importunate man at law waiting to get his cauſe diſcuſſed; or, it is like a hungry man ſitting beſide meat, and would fain have a ſhare: O! therefore, I pray you do not neglect it.

5. A fifth procuring cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face, is folks reſtleſneſs of mind, and unſtayedneſs and unfixedneſs; and this I aver to be a very great cauſe of it. Folks minds chaſing vanity, like a fowl in a flight, ſometimes high, and ſometimes low; ſometimes eaſt, and ſometimes weſt. And that is the cauſe wherefore the Lord withholds the influences of his ſpirit.

6. A ſixth ordinary cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face, is folks keeping converſe with ſome idol or another, and it is inconſiſtent with Chriſtians to have converſe with idols; *For, what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?* And if ye have converſe with idols, ye cannot keep up communion with Chriſt. And,

7. A ſeventh procuring cauſe of folks dullneſs is their indifferency and neutrality in the matters of God; and this is a great cauſe of our dullneſs, that when there is any alteration of times, you will find no great change upon your frame: So it is no wonder to ſee folk dull; for, when the judgment is blind,

blind, folk are not fit for any work: even ſo, when the judgment of folks ſpirit is blind, they are not fit to receive the influences of his Spirit. And,

8. An eigth procuring cauſe of our heavy and dull diſpoſition, and fruitleſs frames, and that is our defection from God: Our leaving the Lord hath procured his leaving of us. There is miniſters defection, and peoples defection. O! we have gone from one ſtep of defection to another; ſo that we may reckon our defections from our receeding from our covenant, and joining with the public reſolutions, when the generality did fall upon concluſions, to bring in the malignant party into places of power and truſt; and from that very day, we have gone from one ſtep of defection to another. And then when abjured prelacy came in, how many of us did countenance it, and went and heard the curates, and did not give a teſtimony againſt it? And at the king's coming home, how many did lay down their charge? And then when the enſnaring indulgence came out, bounded with many reſtrictions, how many of us did gape after theſe? And, alas! what unfaithful dealings were theſe? But inſtead of being faithful, there was a cenſuring of others that was more free. How unfaithful have we been in the time of greateſt hazard? and have not given faithful warning to the people; as if it were not clear in the word, to preach *in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon*: And when there was any public appearance for God, as at Pentland and Bothwell, how few of us did concur with them, and put to our hand to the work, *to help the Lord againſt the mighty?* And now to put on the cope-ſtone on all other ſteps of defection, we have accepted of, and joined with this ſinful liberty, though it be given forth with diſſembling, and many lies: Yet no ſooner this comes forth, but it is accepted as a mercy, or our duty. But we ſay, and aver, that they who do accept of this liberty, they bring a doctrine contrary to that which we have received; for we have received that doctrine, that Chriſt's kingdom is not ſubordinate, nor yet confounded into, or with the civil government: And they upon the matter ſay, that it is both: And they bring not the diſcipline of the church to put a difference between the clean and the unclean. And ſome of them that did muſter themſelves under their popiſh colours, and rode in their armies are admitted and accepted of, and there is none exauterated, how groſs ſoever. There is no difference; and they that have their hands directly in the blood of the ſaints are admitted; and where is the government of our church then? I may with confidence, even deſire you to keep at a diſtance from ſuch courſes, and to keep up a teſtimony by diſcountenancing of them. Let me uſe this parable only; "There "was a great Lord who had a great vineyard, and he com-

" mitted the keeping of it to his ſervants; he gave them in-
" ſtructions how to labour, and knowledge of the nature of
" the ground, and commands them to labour on all hazard,
" and ſo leaves them: Thereafter there comes a ſtated enemy
" to that Lord's ſervants, and declares that they may not la-
" bour, unleſs that they take preſcriptions from him, and
" unleſs that they let all weeds grow beſides the maſter's
" plants." Well, would you not think then, that if they conſented to this, that they were to be taxed with great diſloyalty; and the leaſt that could have been done, were to teſtify againſt him? Well, this hath been the way that they have dealt with Jeſus Chriſt. However, we may think great ſhame of our defection, yet ye may take with the guilt of yours; for, if you had not been a people that loved to have it ſo, you would have been priviledged with better: For many of you have gone and heard the curates; and ſome of you have taken the declaration, and the Highland band; and many of you are guilty of paying the ceſs: How many of you have taken the bond of peace? And many of you have taken the teſt, and the oath of abjuration; and many of you have payed the locality and fines to theſe declared enemies. O! what ſad defection is the generality of the land guilty of? Well then, ſeeing we are ſuch a people, need we think it ſtrange that we are a fruitleſs people? How can he look upon us, but with a frowning face? And,

9. The ninth cauſe of the Lord's hiding of his face, and our dull frame, and that is, our diviſion; take the coals of a fire, and ſcatter them abroad, and the heat will ſoon decay and evaniſh, but ſo long as they are kept together the heat remains; however this is one of the ſad conſequences of our diviſion; love and affection one to another is decayed and gone. Well, then ſay ſome, Why do ye not unite? Why, we dare not unite in a courſe of apoſtacy; we may not quit our reformation for diviſion, but we muſt have them right fathered and right mothered; for it hath been charged all this while on the wrong ſide; for, when two parties are agreed together, ſhall the ſide that ſtands to what they have agreed upon, be blamed for the diviſion or dividers? If two men were walking on the way, and one of them go out of it, ſhall he be blamed that keeps the way? Thoſe are not only the dividers, but they have caſt oil into our flames, by reproaches; however, our diviſions are the ſad conſequences of our departing from God. And then,

10. And laſtly, dullneſs is a common plague, and every one is getting a ſhare of it, and there is ay more and more generally extended: And now we ſee that we are all chargeable with theſe things, and ſome of us chargeable with many of them; whereas every one of them in particular, were enough

nough to procure the Lord's hiding of his face, and provoke him not to ſend down the influences of his Spirit, and how much more when we are all guilty of them? And therefore it is no wonder though we have dull frames and diſpoſitions.

But I proceed to a ſecond doctrine from the words, which is this,

DOCT. 2. *Believers, as believers, have a great longing to have grace in exerciſe, although they cannot attain to it without the ſhedding down of the influences of his Spirit upon them.*

The text confirms this. And the Pſalmiſt, in the eightieth pſalm prays, *Quicken us, and we ſhall call upon thy name.* And we ſee the point confirmed from Cant. v. where the ſpouſe was in a dull frame, and ſhe cannot riſe up till he work by his Spirit, ver. 4. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him.* Ver. 5. *I roſe to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with ſweet ſmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock:* That is, the ſpecial working of the Spirit; *and the hole of the door,* are the entreſs of the heart.

And now for the application. I ſhall ſpeak to ſome things which would be gone about as our duty, for attaining the influences of his Spirit. And,

1. That you would fall about the ſearching of theſe things that have been the particular cauſes of God's withholding them; and ſearch diligently what in you hath been a procuring cauſe thereof. And,

2. A ſecond duty requiſite in order to the attaining of the influences of his Spirit, is this, that whatever ſin ye do find in you to be a procuring cauſe of the withholding of them, that you would mourn for it is as in his ſight; for wherefore do ye ſearch for them, but that you may mourn for them.

3. A third piece of our duty is, to accept of the Lord's withholding of the influences of his Spirit in this reſpect, that it is the puniſhment of our iniquity, not becauſe we are not bringing forth fruit to Chriſt, but we muſt accept of it as the puniſhment of our iniquities, and juſtify God, and acknowledge his ſovereignty, acted in the ſhedding down in the influences of his Spirit, where and when he will.

4. A fourth piece of our duty is, whatever ſin we find to be a procuring cauſe, we would forſake that ſin; for, while you continue in that ſin that you know to be diſpleaſing to him, his Spirit will be further reſtrained. It is a ſtrange thing that ſome folk will grant, that ſuch and ſuch things are ſin, and that theſe things are the cauſes of the Lord's hiding of his face, and being diſpleaſed, and yet they cannot be prevailed with to forſake them. It ſeems they are married to their idols: For, folk that are convinced of ſin, and are not forſaking it, what are they like? They are even like two wicked

ked folk, that there is ill greeance between, and they do never part; Why? becauſe they are married But you would ſtudy to forſake this, and all other ſins that you find diſpleaſing to God.

5. In a word, in order to the attaining of the influences of his Spirit, ye would labour and ſtudy to have every ſin mortified; not only theſe ſins that are the chief cauſes of our fruitleſs frame, but every ſin for the leaſt ſin hath a part of the caſe of it, though there be ſome ſins more heinous in the ſight of God than others; but you would have mortification carried on, as Paul ſays, and unleſs you get heart mortification, corruption will ay ſometime break out.

6. A ſixth piece of our duty that we would go about, in order to the attaining of the influences of his Spirit, and that is, to be uſing diligence in the uſe of the means; negligence procures the want of holy diligence: For, we are ſure that frequency in duty is a mean of fervency in duty. O! therefore, will ye be diligent in the uſe of the means, and this will be very helpful? And then,

7. This will be your duty, that when you miſs Chriſt in one duty, then go to another till you find him: When you miſs him in prayer, then go to reading: And if you miſs him in reading then go to meditation; and if you find him not in meditation, then go to ſpiritual conference: And then, in whatſoever duty you find him, and on whatſoever duty the Lord breathes, then continue there: But when you are not uſing means, you have no ground to expect that the Lord will ſend down the influences of his Spirit upon you: For the ſpouſe ſays, *I will riſe now, and go through the ſtreets of the city.* She goes from one duty to another, till ſhe find him. Thoſe that are diligent at duty, are like a woman that miſſes her huſband, and ſhe ariſes and ſays, I will never return till I find him.

8. This is another piece of our duty, in order to the attaining of the influences of his Spirit, and that is, That you would ſtudy to get your hearts fixed, and this would be a great mean of attaining of them; the Pſalmiſt could ſay, *My heart is fixt, I will ſing:* But when the heart is not fixed, folk are not fit for any work; much leſs for receiving the influences of his Spirit.

Now, O! will ye uſe theſe means, and they will be very helpful for the attaining of a fruitful frame.

But a third doctrine is this,

DOCT. 3. *That fruitfulneſs doth contribute much to the enjoying of the preſence of Chriſt.*

This is clear from John xiv. 23. *Jeſus anſwered and ſaid unto them, If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode*

abode with him. For he will not dwell with the dead, but with the living; not with the barren, but with the fruitful: Therefore if ye desire to enjoy his presence, labour to bring forth fruit unto him.

But I now proceed to a fourth doctrine from the words, which is this,

DOCT. 4. *That believers cannot, and should not call their graces and fruits their own.*

All the graces and fruits of a believer are called Christ's: For, says the spouse, *Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.*

Now, by eating is meant a delighting or feeding in the fruits that believers bring forth, which we shall speak to a little; but before we touch that, it will be needful to shew you some of the fruits of this garden that is called for at your hand. And,

1. There is that grace of faith, whereby a believer lays hold on the promises, and closes a bargain with Christ and this goes on and acts on Christ in all their straits.

2. Love is a plant that hath a very comely, beautiful, smiling face, and it is a very high plant; for it reacheth to the heart of Christ: For faith lays hold, as it were, on the garments, or on the word of Christ; but love lays hold on his heart; and it is a plant that will continue through all eternity; for faith evanisheth into sight, and hope into fruition: But love never evanisheth And,

3. There is a zeal, which is a very rare plant in our day, but it is also a plant of this garden; for, we are not now speaking of the influences of his Spirit, but we are now speaking of the graces of his Spirit. Now we say, where love is, zeal will not be wanting; for love is as the tree, and zeal as the blossom. And then,

4. A fourth plant of this garden is patience; a very strong plant; a very sovereign remedy; there is not an evil but it will remead it: For, what is the reason that so many have complied with a wicked course? But because they had not patience. And,

5 A fifth plant of this garden is humility; a tree that hath a long root, and grows deep downward, and the fruits of it grow upward; and there is not a plant in all the garden that will grow well if it be not their. And,

6. A sixth plant or fruit is, vivifying and enlivening: You must die unto sin and live unto righteousness. And,

7. There is diligence, which is another plant of this garden: You must give all diligence to make your calling and election sure. And,

8. I may

8. I may name purity, a very pleaſant, plant a very noble plant; *For every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf, even as God is pure*, ſays the apoſtle.

And laſtly, There is ſtedfaſtneſs of profeſſion, and though this be a plant that is very needful, yet it is a plant that ſeems to be very rare; and it is a fruit, that the want of it may be the ſad complaint of many in this generation.

II. Now, the ſecond thing to be ſpoken to is, To ſhew you how theſe fruits are ſaid to be Chriſt's; for they are not the believers but in this reſpect, that they are committed to their keeping; but they are called Chriſt's in this reſpect.

1. Becauſe he hath purchaſed all theſe fruits to believers; for believers have a right to nothing, but through his purchaſe and they are a part of it.

2. They are called Chriſt's, becauſe he did plant them according, to John xv. 1. *I am the true vine, and my Father is the huſbandman; and he and his Father are one.* He is both the author and finiſher of theſe fruits; and therefore they are ſaid to be his. And,

3. They are ſaid to be his becauſe he giveth the increaſe; *Paul may plant, and Appollos may water*, but they cannot make one plant to grow, without that he give the increaſe. The ſpouſe was ſenſible of this here in the text, when ſhe prays, That the north and ſouth wind might blow upon her garden.

III. Now, The third thing to be ſhewed from the word is, Wherefore doth he delight in theſe fruits? And,

1. He doth delight in them, becauſe they are his: It is natural for men, and ordinary with them to delight in that which is their own, Iſa. lv. 11. *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul and ſhall be ſatisfied.* For, as we ſaid before, he purchaſed them by ſuffering on the croſs, and in his humiliation.

2. He delights in them, becauſe they are his image, and becauſe they make the perſon that hath them conform to himſelf; for he ſees ſomething of himſelf in them, and becauſe of this he cannot but love them, and delight in them.

3. He deſights in theſe fruits, becauſe by them he is glorified; *Herein is my Father glorified, if ye bring forth much fruit.*

Now, I ſhall cloſe with a word to you that are fruitleſs folk. Well I ſay to you, that Chriſt hath no delight in you. O! let this alarm you, he can eat no fruit of you, and ye cannot bring forth fruit, except ye be brought out of the ſtate of nature. O! therefore, will ye come unto Chriſt, he is now in your offer, and we do certify you, in his name, that you ſhall be welcome: Though you have been the worſt of ſinners, yet come unto him, and he will accept of you.

Therefore

Therefore we beſeech you do not now reject him, leſt it be ſaid unto you. *O ye deſpiſers, behold, and wonder, and periſh.*

2. And a ſecond word to you that are Chriſtians, may I ſay fruitleſs; fruitleſs in reſpect of what ye ſhould be; and fruitleſs in reſpect of what others have been, that have gone before you; and fruitleſs in reſpect of what ye will be, if ever the Lord make uſe of you, as inſtruments of his work; have you any deſire that he ſhould be glorified? O then! will you cry, and give not over till you obtain ſuch an anſwer as the ſpouſe got from him, for it is moſt ſuitable for your caſe? You are all in a manner complaining; but, O! cry, cry, Chriſt, he is abſent; but if you would cry, he would come among you: Therefore, O! cry, cry, *Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleaſant fruit.*

SERMON XLI.

REVELATION xii. 1.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman, cloathed with the ſun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars.

THE works of creation are a wonder, and the works of providence; whereby God guides and governs all his creatures, and all their actions; yea, the moſt common of providence are a great wonder: But here is a wonder greater than any of theſe, *A woman cloathed with the ſun*; which here is called a wonder, yet this cannot be ſeen, but by a ſpiritual eye: For, John ſays here it appeared in heaven.

In ſpeaking to this, we ſhall firſt explain the words a little; and next raiſe ſome doctrines there-from, and proſecute the ſame a little.

Firſt, *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman.* By this is meant the church, which is here compared to a woman; as in other places of ſcripture, Pſalm xlv. 9. Cant. vii. 1.

Secondly, She is ſaid *to be cloathed with the ſun*, which is the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, who is called, *Sun of Righteouſneſs*,

Mal. iv. 2. with whoſe righteouſneſs all believers are cloathed, for, *they put on the Lord Jeſus*, Rom. xiii. 14.

Thirdly, She is ſaid *to have the moon under her feet*; by which is meant, that Chriſt being now come in the fleſh, and ſuffered for ſinners, the ceremonial law was taken away: She was now freed from the yoke of ceremonies; as the ſacrifices, new moons, *etc.* and got them under her feet: Or it may be this, that all believers in Chriſt get ſublunary things under their feet. For, by moon here may be meant the world, and this, through grace, every believer gets under his feet.

Fourthly, *And upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars.* By ſtars here are meant the miniſters of the church, which Chriſt holds on his right hand; and they are ſaid to be upon her head; which is underſtood, that faithful miniſters are the crown and glory of a church: The number twelve here, hath a relation to the twelve apoſtles, whoſe doctrine miniſters ſhould only teach; for, believers are ſaid *to be built upon the foundation of the prophets and apoſtles*, Eph. ii. 20.

Doct. 1. *That Jeſus Chriſt is very tender of his people.*

For here he compares them to a woman, of whom he, as her huſband, will take care; and this compariſon is very ſuitable in theſe reſpects.

1. As a woman is very liable to receive injuries and wrongs; ſo is the church and people of God. And theſe they get from many hands.

2. As a woman is weak, and ſo cannot well either reſiſt the wrongs done her, or reſent them; ſo is the church weak and feeble in herſelf, and not able to reſiſt her enemies, nor reſent the injuries done to her; but here is comfort, Chriſt being her head and huſband, is both mighty, and alſo will reſent all the wrongs done her.

3. As a woman is the mother of children, ſo is the church; for ſhe is ſaid to be Chriſt's mother, Cant. iii. 11. *Behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him!* Chriſt is formed in believers; ſo every lad and laſs, that cloſes with Chriſt, hath him formed in them, and puts the crown on his head (giving him all the glory of their ſalvation) may be his mother.

But more particularly, the church here compared to a woman, is the mother of all believers, and God is the Father; and they are begotten by the word of truth. Yet when our mother plays the harlot and forſakes her huſband, all that would be accounted her true ſons and take their father's part againſt her, muſt plead with her, Hoſ. ii. 1, 2. and witneſs againſt her whoredoms and defections, that ſhe may leave them, and return to her huſband: But our pleading with her muſt be with reverence, as with our mother: Yea, when miniſters,

niſters, who have begotten us to Chriſt, by the word of truth, make defection, we muſt plead with them.

4. As a woman is married to her huſband; ſo is the church married unto Chriſt, who is her head and huſband.

DOCT. II. *That the church of Chriſt is a wonderful thing: and there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman.*

And the church is wonderful,

1. In reſpect of her deſcent, O! ſhe is nobly deſcended, God being her Father; ſhe is called a princes daughter, Cant. vii. 1. *How beautiful are thy feet with ſhoes, O princes daughter!* She is called *the king's daughter, who is all glorious within*, Pſal. xlv. 13.

2. She is wonderful in reſpect of her huſband, Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God, the Fathers delight, and the light of the higher houſe. O! what a condeſcendency is this, that Chriſt, who is the matchleſs one infinite in all perfections, ſhould be married to poor ſinners; this makes it wonderful.

3. The church is wonderful, in reſpect of her privileges beſtowed on her by her huſband Chriſt: And, O! they are many. For,

(1.) She hath the privilege of protection from him: He will protect her from all evil, both of ſin and miſery, Pſal. cxxi. 5, 6, 7. Every condition ſhe may be in, he hath promiſed to keep her from the evil of it: And, O! is not this a noble privilege?

(2.) The church hath the privilege of proviſion from Chriſt, Pſal. xxxiv. 10 *They that ſeek the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* He will give them both ſpiritual food and proviſion to their ſouls in his ordinances, where they may ſweetly feed, and feaſt upon himſelf, and alſo natural proviſion; yea he will give them every thing that is for their good; nor what they think ſo, for many a time, what they think is for their advantage is for their hurt; but he will give them what he ſees for their good.

(3.) They have the privilege of correction from him, *Whom he loveth, he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every Son whom he receiveth*, Heb. xii. 6. O! this is a noble privilege, though many times we think not ſo, to be corrected for our faults, and not ſuffered to go on in ſin without rebuke: For, when we are meeting with any croſs, and corrected for our ſins, we would be ſo far from ſpurning at him, or quarrelling with him, that we would bleſs him for the ſame; for, to be left of the Lord, and without his corrections, is one of the ſaddeſt judgments mentioned in ſcripture, *Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone*, Hoſ. iv. 17.

(4.) They have the privilege of hearing their prayers, 1 John v. 14, 15. But if we would have the privilege, to have our prayers heard, and made out to us, then we muſt pray in faith,

by the help of his holy ſpirit, for things agreeable to his will: For, alas! there are many of us, though we may have the words of prayer, and the gift of prayer, yet nothing of the ſpirit is in them all, and ſo we cannot expect to be heard of him.

(5) They have the privilege of a right and title to the kingdom of heaven, and is not that a noble privilege which they have? For through Chriſt being intereſted in the covenant, *they are children, they are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Chriſt*, Rom. viii. 17.

4. The church is wonderful in reſpect of her laws, which are all holy juſt, and good, and eaſy to be borne and obeyed; and in reſpect of her doctrine, which is pure and free from corruption. It is one of the things which makes this woman (to wit the church) wonderful, that ſhe hath upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars; whereby is meant, faithful miniſters, holding and maintaing the true and pure doctrine of Chriſt.

Doct. 3. *That theſe who are the true members of the church, they are not naked, but cloathed with the Sun, which is the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.*

The women is ſaid *to be cloathed with the Sun.* And this cloathing wherewith believers are cloathed, is,

1. A glorious cloathing; no covering is like it. Our firſt parents after they fell, when they ſaw their nakedneſs, they ſewed fig leaves to cover the ſame; this was not ſufficient, and ſo the Lord made them coats of ſkins; but this cloathing is more glorious and excellent than any of the theſe.

2. This cloathing is ſtrong, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is impregnable againſt all aſſaults made againſt the ſame; ſin, hell, wrath, yea, the juſtice of God cannot pierce it, it is proof againſt the ſame.

3. It is a coſtly cloathing; it was purchaſed not by corruptible things, as gold and ſilver, *etc.* but by the blood of Chriſt. O! it coſt him his precious blood, and that ſhould endear it to us; before it was purchaſed, it behoved him to leave heaven, and come to the earth, to ly three quarters of a year in a virgin's belly, to live in the world, and to die a painful and curſed death, and all to purchaſe this cloathing to poor ſinners. O! ſhould not this make us to wonder, and to look upon it as a coſtly covering!

4. Albeit this be a coſtly cloathing, yea ſuch a cloathing as angel, and men, ſet them altogether, could not weave or work the like; yet it is cheap and eaſy to be obtained; for, give but your hearty conſent to have it, and it is your own, *Ho! every one that thirſteth, come ye to the waters; come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price*, Iſa. lv. 1. O! is not this a cheap cloathing: Take and receive it, and it is your own; open the doors of your hearts open the two

leaves

leaves thereof, to wit, the aſſent of your judgment and underſtanding, and the conſent of your will, and the king of glory will come in and dwell with you, Pſal. xxiv. 7.

5. This cloathing is an everlaſting cloathing; it is ſo durable that neither time nor eternity will wear it out, or make it old: It is the fine white linnen, the righteouſneſs of the ſaints; theſe long robes which they always wear.

Next we ſhall ſhew you ſome things that are requiſite, in order to a being cloathed with the Sun, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; all have not this cloathing, they are but few. And,

1. Theſe who would be cloathed with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they muſt be ſenſible of, and ſee their own nakedneſs; for otherwiſe they will never ſeek a cloathing to cover the ſame; all, by nature, being blind: O labour for the ſight and ſenſe of this! that ſo ye may ſeek a covering, and ye will not get ſuch a covering any where elſe as this.

2. Theſe who would be cloathed with this righteouſneſs, albeit they ſee their own nakedneſs, yet they muſt not make a coat of their own working and ſewing, as our firſt parents did, of fig leaves; for, it is not ſufficient to cover you from wrath, and the juſtice of God. O! guard againſt this deceit, of going about to eſtabliſh your own righteouſneſs, which by nature we are all prone to; for all you can do in this, will prove but as rotten rags, and filthy garments; yea, as a ſpider's web, which is eaſy broken: But get on this cloathing of the Sun, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt on you, and it will not only be a glorious, but a durable and ſtrong cloathing, proof againſt every thing that may aſſault it.

3. They muſt ſee their own unworthineſs, how unworthy they are of ſuch a cloathing. O! a ſoul that gets a right ſight of itſelf, how vile and ſinful it is; and of Chriſt, how glorious and excellent he is, it will make them look upon themſelves as baſe and unworthy to have ſuch a cloathing as his unſpotted righteouſneſs is; it will humble them in their own ſight.

4. Theſe who would be cloathed with Chriſt's righteouſneſs, they muſt actually put on this glorious cloathing, Rom. xiii. 14. otherwiſe it ſhall never be theirs. You muſt take and receive Chriſt as your own, and embrace him, yea, enter into a formal covenant with him, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

5. If ye would put on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, receive and embrace him: Then ye muſt do it.

(1.) Wholly; you muſt receive and embrace whole Chriſt, as prophet, prieſt, and king: He cannot be divided: Many would take him as a prieſt, to ſave them from their ſins, but they cannot endure to receive him as a prophet, to teach and lead them aright in his way, and as a king to reign in, and over them, and to be ſubject to his laws; this croſſes too much

their

their nature, therefore they ſpurn againſt it. But, O! he muſt be embraced wholly, or not at all.

(2.) He muſt be embraced only; he muſt be your alone Saviour, without any competitor: Ye muſt not think to divide your ſalvation betwixt him and other Saviours, ſo as he may do a part of it, and ye another yourſelf: No; ye muſt not do that, ye muſt quit your own righteouſneſs, and ye muſt take him as your alone and only Redeemer, whoſe righteouſneſs only (without your own, or any other's) is ſufficient.

(3) He muſt be cloſed with willingly; the conſent of the will, as well as the aſſent of the mind muſt be in it: It cannot be done hankeringly, but chearfully and pleaſantly.

(4.) It muſt be done knowingly.

(5.) It muſt be done with deliberation; not raſhly in a fit, or when a flaſh is upon you, but deliberately: For, when the ſoul is about to cloſe with Chriſt, it hath many wooers to divert it, and ſeeking its ruin; and ſo it ſits down to deliberate which of them to make choice of. It is like a woman who hath many ſuitors; it hath the devil, the world, its ill heart, and corruption within, all in ſuit of it; and this hinders it, until Chriſt, by his ſtrong power, rightly determine it to make choice of himſelf.

(6.) It muſt be done ſeriouſly; it being the moſt ſerious buſineſs that is gone about; and the ſoul that is more ſerious about other things than ever it was about this grand buſineſs, may ſuſpect it is yet *in the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity.*

It may be here aſked, How ſhall one know whether they have put on the Lord Jeſus, and are cloathed with the cloathing or not?

Anſ. 1. Theſe who are cloathed with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they are advancing in the work of mortification: Theſe who have put on the Lord Jeſus, make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof, Rom. xiii. 14. For when they do embrace Chriſt for juſtification, they cloſe with him alſo for ſanctification; as it is their great deſire to be juſtified by his righteouſneſs, ſo alſo to be ſanctified by his Spirit, that the ſtrong holds of ſin may be brought down, and ſpiritual wickedneſs that are in the high places of their ſouls mortified, that ſo they may perfect holineſs, in the fear of the Lord.

Anſ. 2. They who are cloathed with Chriſt's righteouſneſs, they give their conſent to the terms of the covenant, held out to ſinners therein: They embrace him, as he offers himſelf in the goſpel, to be their prophet, prieſt, and king: They cloſe with a whole Chriſt, with a broken heart; and with a broken Chriſt, with a broken heart. As Chriſt in the covenant makes an aſſignation to them of himſelf, of his grace and glo-

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ry, yea, of all the benefits and privileges of the covenant, ſo they make a reſignation of themſelves, and all that they have, to him: They give away themſelves to him, to be his, and for him.

Anſ. 3. They like the way to ſalvation and happineſs, as well as happineſs itſelf: As they deſire heaven, ſo they are well pleaſed with the way to it, which is the way of holineſs; and in it they deſire to walk. I doubt not but all of you would deſire heaven; but many of you are not pleaſed with the way to it; ye think it too ſtrait and narrow: But if ever you expect to come there, ye muſt be pleaſed with the way to it. The profaneſt man in all the country will deſire heaven and happineſs, but he cannot abide the way to it: Balaam deſired to die the death of the righteous, and his laſt end to be like his, Numb. xxiii. 10. but he had no will to live the life of the righteous.

Anſ. 4. Theſe cloathed with this glorious garment, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they have the word of God dwelling in them, Col. iii. 16. It is a guide to them, teaching them how to walk: It is a lanthorn before them, letting them ſee their way; but, if they have not the Spirit of God to be as eyes to them, whereby they may ſee it, and the way where to walk, they will not be the better of it. They are like a blind man, although he have a lanthorn before him, it is of no uſe to him, becauſe he wants eyes to ſee it with. Theſe who have the word abiding in them, it will be their prayer, that their eyes may be opened, *that they may behold wonderful things out of his laws*, Pſal. cxix. 18. and that *they may be quickened according to his word*, Pſal. cxix. 25. They deſire the light of manifeſtation only, in and by the light of revelation.

Anſ. 5. Theſe cloathed with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they have his Spirit dwelling in them, Rom. viii. 9. And where the ſpirit is,

(1.) It convinceth of ſin; opening the ſoul's eyes to ſee ſin's hatefulneſs: It makes the ſoul hate ſin, mourn for it, and forſake it.

(2.) It quickens to all duties; makes it lively in its motion toward Chriſt.

(3.) Where the ſpirit is, it is predominating and prevailing; it will not be an underling, but carry on its work until the ſame be perfected.

(4.) It is a ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, Zech. xii. 10. It helps to pray, without which no prayers are acceptable before God.

Uſe 1. Of examination. O! examine yourſelves; try whether ye be cloathed with this glorious garment or not: See whether ye have put on the Lord Jeſus or not. O! ſad is, and will be, your condition, if ye have not on this glorious garment,

garment, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt: If ye have it not on yet, reſt not till ye have it put on, and can ſay upon good ground, *I am my beloved's, and he is mine.*

Uſe 2. Of exhortation. O! be intreated to cloſe with, and embrace Chriſt, as he offers himſelf to you this night. O! put on the Lord Jeſus; get on this glorious garment the Sun, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, on you, and it ſhall be a proof againſt ſin, the devil, hell, wrath, and the juſtice of God.

Doct. 4. They who have on this glorious cloathing of the Sun, the Kighteouſneſs of Chriſt, on them, they win above the world; the moon is beneath their feet, as it is in the text; *the woman cloathed with the ſun, hath the moon under her feet.*

It may be enquired, what of the world do believers win above, and get under their feet!

Anſ. 1. They win above the honour of the world, which is the thing (many one to purchaſe) has ſold their part of ſalvation, and heaven; and when they have gotten it, it is a poor empty thing which ſoon evaniſheth: But the believer, through grace, gets this under his feet, he is more nobly minded, than to be taken up about this; he ſees it to be but vanity; and therefore he tramples upon it, that he may lay hold upon that which is abiding. And,

2. He wins above the applauſe of the world; which, alas! is the thing that many are only ſeeking; and, O! what great pains will they be at to get it; and when obtained, it is but airy and ſoon gone: Many miniſters will be at great pains in preaching, and learned men in writting will ſtretch their wits, and all to ſeek applauſe; yea, it is the thing that many profeſſors and ſufferers are ſeeking, but the believer, through grace wins above this. And,

3. He wins through grace above the profits of the world, and tramples it under his feet; being more heavenly-minded, than to be taken up about that which is ſo fading. Love to have, and keep the riches of the world, hath been the great cauſe why many in this day, have complied with enemies, ſo as to hear the curates, pay wicked impoſitions, take ſinful oaths, and bonds, repugnant to the oath of our covenants; yea, the ſmootheſt of them, the oath of abjuration, hath many evils in it. I do not deny, but ſome believers, in this day of temptation and trial, the world hath win ſo far above them, as to cauſe them go on in ſome of theſe dreadful courſes; but they muſt repent for the ſame, either explicitely or implicitely: If they get a ſight of them in their ſinfulneſs, then they will repent and mourn for the ſame explicitely; but if they never get a ſight of them, yet they will repent for them implicitely among their other ſecret ſins, which will be pardoned: David prayed *to be cleanſed from ſecret faults*, Pſal. xix. 12.

4. He

4. He wins through grace, above the pleaſures of the world, which are ſo enſnaring to many. O! theſe ye muſt get under your feet, if ye would be cloathed with the Sun, the glorious cloathing of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs. Hear what Chriſt ſays to his ſpouſe, *Come with me from Lebanon, my ſpouſe, with me from Lebanon: Look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions dens, and the mountains of the leopards*, Cant iv. 8. Come and leave the pleaſures of the world; be more ſpiritually minded, than to be entangled with them; get them beneath your feet, *Come with Chriſt from Lebanon*, &c. That is leave the world tho' as pleaſant as Lebanon. Cloſe with Chriſt, and ye ſhall get his company.

And to preſs you to this great duty *of getting the moon under your feet*, the world, and the honour, applauſe, profits, and pleaſures thereof, under your feet: I will make uſe of ſome arguments.

Argum. 1. The world, profits, and pleaſures thereof, are but dens of lions, and mountains of leopards: Dens for wicked and profane men, of ravenous and bloody natures; and ſo it is not for ſaints to reſt and ly down with ſuch. O! Believers ſhould be of a more noble ſpirit than to wallow in the mire with ſuch ſwine. Chriſt invites his people *to come with him from Lebanon, and to look from the top of Amana*, which were pleaſant and delightſome places; whereby he would have her to underſtand, that ſhe ſhould leave the world, tho' pleaſant as Lebanon, or Amana, *etc.* And to perſuade to this, though they were pleaſant, yet they were dens of lions, and mountains of leopards; and ſo not to be ſtayed in.

Argum. 2 Let this move you to labour to get the moon, the world, under your feet: Though you could win to get all the pleaſures and profits thereof, yet the enjoyment of them all could not ſatisfy you; for the ſoul is ſuch a thing which nothing can ſatisfy but Chriſt. One ſays the heart of man is three-nooked, and the world round, and ſo the world can never fill it; there is ay ſome wants: Let a man have never ſo much of the world, it cannot ſatisfy him; he would ſtill have more. Although Pompey had the empire of the eaſt, and Cæſar that of the weſt, yet neither of them could be ſatisfied with what they had, but fought one againſt another for the government of the whole. Alexander the Great, although he had much, yet he deſired more. And Solomon the wiſeſt, and richeſt of kings, he could find no ſatisfaction in all that he had in the world, but writes this motto upon them all, *Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

Argum. 3. Let this move you to trample the world, and all the pleaſures and profits thereof under your feet, that ye will ſoon leave them: Death is approaching which will part

you and them; and therefore ſet not your hearts on them, but look upon yourſelves as pilgrims and ſtrangers, as all your fathers were.

Argum. 4. Let this perſuade you to it, that it is the command of Chriſt that ye ſhould do it; and, O let this have weight with you to trample the world under your feet, and be more heavenly-minded! He invites and intreats you to come with him from Lebanon, from the pleaſures of the world: And to preſs you to this, he promiſes you his company, Come with me, *etc.* and, O! is not this deſirable!

Doct. 5. *That a faithful miniſtry is the great glory of a church.*

A part of the woman's glory, deſcribed in the text, is, *That ſhe had upon her head a crown of twelve ſtars;* that is, faithful miniſters are called ſtars in ſcripture; holding the doctrine of the twelve apoſtles, they are her crown.

It may be enquired here, Who are theſe miniſters whom we ſhould own, honour and reſpect, as faithful miniſters of Chriſt, and whom we ſhould look upon as our crown and glory?

Anſ. 1. This is to be underſtood, all them whom we are to hear and reſpect, muſt be lawfully ordained miniſters, in Chriſt's orderly and appointed way; unleſs they be ſent we cannot hear them preach. But,

(1.) Theſe whom we ſhould honour and reſpect as Chriſt's ambaſſadors, they muſt be ſuch, who *hold faſt the form of ſound words*, 2 Tim. i. 13. They muſt not only hold faſt, and be found in the fundamental truths of the goſpel, but in the words of Chriſt's patience, and the teſtimony he gives his church to contend for.

(2.) We ſhould own and reſpect theſe who can ſay, with Paul, *they are pure from the blood of all men, for they have not ſhunned to declare unto the people, all the counſel of God*, Acts xx. 26, 27. and have kept nothing back that was profitable for them; but declared unto them the ſins and ſnares, duties, and dangers of the day.

3. We ſhould own, honour, and reſpect ſuch, who preach the word, *and are inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon*, 2 Tim. iv. 2. not forſaking their duty, when the generality thinks it unſeaſonable, but preaching out of ſeaſon, to wit, the time the world thinks ſo, as well as in it.

Uſe Now this may ſerve to let us ſee,

1. The bleſſed and happy ſtate of the church, which hath faithful miniſters: O! they are adorned with a noble crown and with great glory.

2 It may let us alſo ſee the ſad ſtate of that church and people, who are plagued with unfaithful miniſters: O! they want this crown: And, alas! unfaithful miniſters are a great part

part of our miſery in this land: We may ſay the *crown is fallen from our heads, wo unto us that we have ſinned*, Lam. v. 16. Many of our miniſters are guilty of groſs ſteps of defections, ſome in complying with enemies; others in lying by from their duty; and now; alas! the generality of them are guilty of embracing and accepting of this antichriſtian toleration, flowing from the fountain of abſolute power, arrogated by the preſent dominator; a power, above all laws, both divine and human. Abſolute power is that which nône can claim to but God, who is infinite, and whoſe will is a law: But yet the preſent tyrant claims this, and requires all to obey it, without reſerve of religion, conſcience, credit, or honour; but all are to be mancipate and enſlaved to it: O! if we had the zeal of Chriſtians, or the courage of men, we would diſdain to be home-born ſlaves; yet this is the fountain from which this liberty comes: The channel through which it runs, is the ſuſpending of our penal laws againſt idolaters, the taking away the legal bulwark, whereby our religion is ſecured: And the greateſt liberty granted by this toleration, is only to quakers, the greateſt of hereticks on the right hand; and to papiſts, the greateſt on the left hand; to them it is free and unlimited: But that which is granted to preſbyterians, is clogged and bounded; for miniſters are reſtricted in their doctrine, that they may preach nothing that may any way tend to alienate the hearts of the people from him who grants it, or his government; hereby they are bound up from preaching againſt the ſins and ſnares of the time; for that will be by court expoſitors interpreted, an alienating of peoples hearts from the government. And theſe who do accept of the toleration, they change the holding of their miniſtry, which they had from Chriſt, and do depend upon the courts of men: For, by the proclamation, though a miniſter be never ſo well qualified, yet he cannot exerciſe his office, in any place, except he give up his name to ſome of the councellors, or ſheriffs, and they to be pleaſed with him; and, as to the deſigns of granting it, they are very ſad and dreadful; ſome whereof are declared in the proclamation, others may be gueſſed at: That which is declared in the proclamation is, that thereby all the hearts of his ſubjects may be united unto him in loyalty, and to their neighbours in love. Now, what is this loyalty, he would have them unite in, but a ſtupid ſubjection to his abſolute power, which he hath arrogated. It is not a Chriſtian loyalty for conſcience ſake, nor a preſbyterian loyalty according to our covenants, national and ſolemn league. And who are theſe neighbours he would have us unite with, but Papiſts, with whom we ſhould have an irreconcilable war? And as to the ends gueſſed at, are they not theſe, that hereby he may get his abſolute power by him arrogate and obeyed;

and that he may get popery and idolatry into the land again: And with this portion of liberty he may ſtop the mouths of proteſtants, while he is filling the places of power and truſt with papiſts, that ſo he may get popery brought in the more eaſily.

Now, my friends, as ye would deſire to be free of the many ſins and evils that are wrapt up in this toleration, and of the wrath and judgment wherewith it will be purſued; and as ye would not co-operate with the wicked deſign of the granter, nor have your ſouls ſubverted from the words of knowledge, ye would not concur, nor have any thing ado with this toleration, nor countenance theſe miniſters who have embraced and accepted the ſame.

Let us pray.

SERMON XLII.

Preached in the ſhire of Fife, January 24th, 1688.

PSALM xlv. 10.

Hearken, O daughter, and conſider, and incline thine ear; forget alſo thine own people, and thy father's houſe.

THERE is, firſt, the preface, in verſe firſt, *My heart is meditating*, &c. The ſpirit of God, as it were, boiling in the heart of the pſalmiſt, until he got a vent to it, his heart was taken up about noble and ſweet meditations: We ſhould guard againſt vain thoughts, and be much exerciſed and taken up about heavenly things, meditating upon Chriſt, and upon heaven: But alas! this is not our exerciſe. There is,

Secondly, The ſubject matter of the pſalmiſt, and that is touching the king, to wit, Chriſt: And the excellencies of Chriſt are deſcribed, which are many, wonderful and great. For,

Verſe 2. *He is fairer than the ſons of men*, even as he is man; but infinitely tranſcending them all, as he is God, *being the expreſs image of the Father, and the fulneſs of the Godhead dwells in him bodily.*

Verſe 3.

Verſe 3. *Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O moſt mighty.* And, Verſe 4. 5, 6. Here is his glory and majeſty held forth, riding in a ſtately poſture, as it were, in this glorious chariot having four wheels. The firſt wheel is majeſty; pointing at his greatneſs, power, and glory. The ſecond is ſtrength; holding out his faithfulneſs. The third is meekneſs; ſhewing his humility and low condeſcendency to ſinners. The fourth is righteouſneſs; he is right and righteous in himſelf, and makes all his people righteous in his ſight, through the covering of his righteouſneſs. O! we ſhould long and pray for that day when we ſhall ſee Chriſt riding in that ſtately poſture, ſhewing himſelf to be moſt mighty, to be *KINGS OF KINGS: AND, LORD OF LORDS;* and that he may *gird his ſword upon his thigh, and in his majeſty ride proſperouſly, going forth conquering and to conquer;* overcoming his people more to his ſervice, ſubduing their ſins and corruptions, and breaking his enemies in pieces, who will not bow to him: His riding in this glorious poſture may ſerve to comfort his people under all diſcouragements, and in the midſt of diſtreſſes; for, he hath not only a ſword to defend them, but a ſcepter *(the cepter of his kingdom, is a right cepter)* to rule and guide them; and it may be, of terror to all his enemies; his ſword of power will reach them, and *his arrows are ſharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people falls under him.*

Verſe 7. *Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil above thy fellows.* Chriſt received not the ſpirit in meaſure, but was filled with the Holy Ghoſt above his fellows, to wit, all believers: So he is a full ſtored, and compleatly furniſhed Mediator; a Saviour to ſupply all the wants of his people: Whatever they need, it is to be found in him. O! what condeſcendency and matter of wonder is this, that all believers are called Chriſt's fellows?

Verſe 8. *All thy garments ſmell of myrrh, aloes, and caſſia,* &c. Pointing out this, that all Chriſt's ordinances, appointed in his word, are the means he hath commanded his people to make uſe of, and wherein he hath promiſed to be found of thoſe that ſeek him, ſmell all ſweetly of himſelf. O! his ordinances when he is found in them, ſmell pleaſantly of himſelf; yea, the ſmell thereof far excells that of *aloes myrrh, and caſſia;* yea, *and all the ſpices of the merchants.* O! frequent his ordinances appointed by himſelf, make uſe of the means he will approve of, and he will be found of you, and your ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and with fatneſs. The ſmell ye ſhall find ſhall be pleaſant and fragrant, more than that of myrrh, *&c.*

Verſe 10. which is the text, *hearken, O daughter,* &c. contains an invitation by Chriſt to his church and people, whom he

he calls his daughter, *to leave her people, and forget her father's houſe.*

For explaining the words a little, I ſhall ſhew you how the word *hearken* hath divers acceptations in ſcripture.

1. It is taken for obedience, Joſh. i. 17. *As we hearkned to Moſes in all things, ſo will we hearken unto thee.*

2. It is put for the granting a petition, Deut. ix. 19. *But the Lord hearkned unto me at that time alſo.*

3. It is put for not conſenting unto a requeſt, 1 Kings xx. 8. *All the elders and all the people ſaid unto him, hearken not unto him, nor conſent.*

4 It is the ſame with liſtning, as it were, and laying to the ear to hear what is ſpoken, Iſa. xlix. 1. *Liſten, O iſles, and hearken ye people from a far*

5. It is put for receiving inſtruction, Jer xxxv. 13. *Will ye not receive inſtruction to hearken to my words, ſaith the Lord.*

6. It is the ſame with hearing, Job xxxvii. 2. *Hear attentively the noiſe of his voice, and the ſound that is gone out of his mouth.*

7. It is all one with inclining the ear, as in the text, a bending of the ear to hear what is ſpoken, *hearken, O daughter, conſider, and incline thine ear.* The Lord uſes theſe three expreſſions, *hearken, conſider, and incline thine ear,* to hold forth with what great earneſtneſs ſhe ſhould hearken to what he was ſaying, *forget alſo thine own people and thy father's houſe;* that is, ſhe ſhould leave all that ſhe had from her firſt father Adam, and got in his houſe, and come to Chriſt.

DOCT. 1. *That Chriſt is very tender of his people.*

In the text he calls them *his daughter,* and he as a father takes care of them, Rev. xii. 1. His church is called a *woman,* who is liable to many injuries, and encompaſſed about with infirmities; and ſo he, as her head and huſband, takes care of them; yea. his care and tenderneſs of them is ſo great, that *he carries the lambs in his boſom, and gently leads thoſe that are with young,* Iſa. xl. 11. He takes ſpecial notice of the kids, to wit, young beginners, leſt they ſhould wander and go aſtray. When the ſpouſe is ſeeking direction where ſhe might find her beloved, ſhe is bidden *go away by the footſteps of the flock, and feed her kids beſide the ſhepherds tents,* Song i. 7, 8. O! what a wonderful myſtery is this in the text? He calls her *his daughter,* and yet he invites her to be married unto him, and he to be her huſband; this holds forth the near relation that is between Chriſt and his people; the neareſt relation that is between any in the earth; there is the ſame between him and his people, he is their father, and they his ſons and daughters; he the head, and they the members; he the huſband, and they the ſpouſe; he the king and they the ſubjects; he the Lord and maſter, and they the ſervants.

For,

For *Uſe.* Seeing it is ſo that Chriſt is ſo tender of his people; it may teach us,

1. That we ſhould ſubject ourſelves to him, to be his, and for him; we ſhould ſubject ourſelves to his laws and ordinances, for they are all eaſy and light: Subject yourſelves to him, and quarrel not againſt him; let not your hearts riſe againſt his ſovereignty, nor quarrel at his way of procedure with you and others.

2. As he is tender of his people, ſo we ſhould be tender of his glory and truths, that we and others may not wrong them; but, alas! where is our zeal for, and tenderneſs of his truths and cauſe in this day, when they have been, and are ſo wronged and wounded! and let your zeal for his truths, and againſt the wrongs done to the ſame appear: O! be tender of his truths.

3. It teaches us to be tender of his people, and to be tender of one another: And if ye would be tender of one another: Then,

(1.) We ſhould love one another: This is a duty much commanded and commended in ſcripture; Chriſt enjoins it many a time to his diſciples, that they ſhould love one another; and Paul in his epiſtles, preſſes it much.

(2.) We ſhould ſympathize with one another: We ought to bear burden with all his afflicted members. But, Oh! and alas! ye in this country-ſide, where hath your ſympathy with his afflicted people appeared? For ye have been at eaſe and in quiet, while many in the weſt have been ſore perſecute; ſome to wandering, toſſing, and hiding; others to bonds, impriſonment, baniſhment, and death for his truths. O! ly not at eaſe, but be concerned with his cauſe, and ſympathize with his people.

(3.) If we would be tender of one another, then we ſhould reprove one another for our faults; this is a great duty, tho' unpleaſant to nature, and that which many do not like; yet to reprove one another is much commanded and preſſed in the word, and it is the greateſt act of love we can ſhew to our brother, not to ſuffer ſin upon him, but to rebuke him, Lev. xix. 17.

(4.) If we would be tender of our brother, then we ſhould withdraw from him when he walketh diſorderly after all our admonitions, exhortations, and reproofs, prove ſucceſsleſs; this alſo is an act of love to him, but it ſhould be the laſt thing we can do with him, and with great tenderneſs; and, with ſorrow of heart obſerving that rule, yet *counting him not as an enemy, but admoniſh him as a brother,* 1. Theſſ. iii. 15.

DOCT. 2. *Theſe who are believers in, and daughters of Chriſt, they ſhould hearken and incline their ear, and conſider what he ſays.*

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(2.) We ſhould ſympathize with one another: We ought to bear burden with all his afflicted members. But, Oh! and alas! ye in this country-ſide, where hath your ſympathy with his afflicted people appeared? For ye have been at eaſe and in quiet, while many in the weſt have been ſore perſecute; ſome to wandering, toſſing, and hiding; others to bonds, impriſonment, baniſhment, and death for his truths. O! ly not at eaſe, but be concerned with his cauſe, and ſympathize with his people.

(3.) If we would be tender of one another, then we ſhould reprove one another for our faults; this is a great duty, tho' unpleaſant to nature, and that which many do not like; yet to reprove one another is much commanded and preſſed in the word, and it is the greateſt act of love we can ſhew to our brother, not to ſuffer ſin upon him, but to rebuke him, Lev. xix. 17.

(4.) If we would be tender of our brother, then we ſhould withdraw from him when he walketh diſorderly after all our admonitions, exhortations, and reproofs, prove ſucceſsleſs; this alſo is an act of love to him, but it ſhould be the laſt thing we can do with him, and with great tenderneſs; and, with ſorrow of heart obſerving that rule, yet *counting him not as an enemy, but admoniſh him as a brother,* 1. Theſſ. iii. 15.

DOCT. 2. *Theſe who are believers in, and daughters of Chriſt, they ſhould hearken and incline their ear, and conſider what he ſays.*

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He preſſes this in the text; and Iſa. lv 3. *Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your ſoul ſhall live.*

In ſpeaking to this, I ſhall ſhew,

I. What way ye muſt conſider.

II. Shew you ſome things that this day he is calling upon you to conſider.

I. As to the firſt of theſe, if ye would rightly conſider what Chriſt is ſaying, then ye muſt do it,

1. Attentively; take good heed what ye hear, and conſider ſeriouſly upon the ſame. O my friends! let not your hearts wander after vanities, when ye are hearing the word, but let your hearts be preſent. I fear many of you this night, though ye be here, yet your minds are going out after your goods, gear, and cattle, and at home in your houſes.

2. Ye muſt do it in faith, for without this, it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, Heb. xi. 6. We muſt believe not only that he is, but what he is; that he is holy, juſt, wiſe and merciful God, otherwiſe we can do no duty aright.

3. Ye muſt do it in love: loving him and all his commands.

4. It muſt be done with delight; cheerfully obeying what he commands.

5. It muſt be done with a ſubmiſſive ſpirit, not murmuring at his commands, but cheerfully acquieſcing unto what he enjoins without diſputing, though croſs to our nature.

II. I ſhall ſhew you ſome things that Chriſt would have you to conſider this day: O! think upon the ſame ſeriouſly; ſlight them not, for they are matters of great moment and conſequence, and very worthy your conſideration: As,

1. Conſider your natural ſtate; ye were all born in a ſtate of enmity againſt God, in a ſtate of ſin and miſery; by nature your underſtanding is darkned, ſo that ye cannot diſcern of ſpiritual things; your will is perverſe, ſo that ye cannot will that which is ſpiritually good; and the affections depraved ſo that ye cannot do that which is right. O! conſider ſeriouſly upon your ſtate; for, if ye die in that natural ſtate, miſerable will your lot be.

2. Conſider your own impotency to help yourſelves out of that miſerable ſtate you were born in, all ye can do in this will be to no purpoſe; yea, angels and men cannot help you. O! do not think to make a Chriſt of your duties; for they cannot help you out of that ſtate; and go not about to make a Saviour of your own righteouſneſs, for that will not ſave you, it will prove as rotten rags, and filthy garments.

3. Conſider your own unworthineſs to be delivered out of that ſad ſtate; for there is nothing in you to commend you to a Saviour: A right ſight of yourſelves, and of your ſin, will make you think yourſelves unworthy of mercy. O! do not think yourſelves worthy of ſalvation, or more worthy than o-

thers

thers, but humble yourſelves in his ſight, and under the ſenſe of your ſin; have a low eſteem of yourſelves.

4. Conſider this great truth, this faithful ſaying, which is *worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt Jeſus came into the world to ſave ſinners:* He is a compleat Saviour, and well furniſhed Redeemer, able to ſave and redeem all that come to him. O! therefore come unto him; embrace him as your Saviour, for he is willing to receive. O! cloſe with him, by faith as your Prophet, Prieſt, and King. Though ye have ſlighted him formerly, yet now is he willing to accept of you. O! conſider ſeriouſly upon it, for it is matter of great concernment; yea, of no leſs, than that which concerns the eternal welfare of your immortal ſouls.

5. Conſider ſeriouſly whether ye have actually cloſed with Chriſt or not.

6. O! Conſider, whether ye be born again or not; if ever ye knew what regeneration, and the pangs of the new-birth were. O! ſit down ſeriouſly, and conſider on this great buſineſs, ſet about the work of ſelf examination: though it be painful and againſt nature, yet it is profitable: Put yourſelves to the trial, to ſee whether ye know any thing of religion, and of the ſaving work of the Spirit of God upon your ſouls; think not this a light buſineſs; it is of no leſs conſequence, than the eternal ſalvation of your ſouls. And,

7. Conſider your ways Hag. i. 5. Conſider your perſonal walk, how ye have carried in your ways as to that; all ye who are guilty of perſonal ſins and ſcandals, as drunkenneſs, ſwearing, uncleanneſs, or any other way; O! conſider upon the ſame; turn unto the Lord. Mourn for theſe things and get pardon for the ſame. Conſider your way alſo, as to the public cauſe, what hath been your carriage in reference to that: Alas! ye in this place of Fife, many of you are guilty of defection from his truths, and of compliance with enemies. Many of you are guilty of hearing theſe abjured hirelings, the curates, though ye got faithful warning to the contrary: O! conſider the ſinfulneſs of ſuch a courſe, for thereby ye are guilty of bringing in that lordly dominion of prelacy into his houſe, which he never commanded in his word, thereby ye have conſented to the extruſion of Chriſt's faithful miniſters out of his vineyard, and to the intruſion of theſe abjured hirelings in their room: Ye are thereby guilty of ſtrengthning the hands of evil doers; and ye are thereby guilty of perjury; prelacy being expreſly abjured by our covenants. Many of you again have payed the ceſs and locality, for the maintenance and upholding of enemies; conſider the wickedneſs thereof; for the paying thereof is the ſame, as if ye had bought a gun or a ſword to give the ſoldiers to murder all the ſervants and people of the Lord: Or, as if every one of you

had brought a coal to make a fire to burn them all in: Of the ſin of this ye got alſo faithful warning, which makes the paying of it now more heinous.

Many of you have alſo taken theſe dreadful oaths and bonds that come along, all repugnant to the oath and bond of our covenants. O! conſider upon theſe things ſeek repentance and forgivenneſs for them; and conſider the great danger the intereſt of Chriſt is in this day: The proteſtant intereſt is in hazard to be razed and ruined; therefore be not ſecure.

7. Conſider the danger ye are in, and be not at eaſe: O conſider it ſeriouſly; rouze up yourſelves, for God is angry with the lands. Is not our religion, and the intereſt of Chriſt in great danger, when he that hath now uſurped the regal power is a profeſſed papiſt, and a ſworn vaſſal and votary of Antichriſt, and one who is a member of the ſociety of Jeſuits, the cruelleſt and bloodieſt ſort of all the Papiſts; yea, one who ſaid, that he would either convert England to the catholic faith, or die a martyr; yea, who ſaid alſo that it would not be right, till the weſt of Scotland were made a hunting field? O then! are we not in great danger! And now, to carry on his deſigns the more undiſcernable, he hath granted a pretended favour and toleration to proteſtants, which he can remove when he ſees fit; for, it is his principles to be treacherous, and to keep no faith to heretics, (as papiſts and proteſtants).

O my friends, conſider the hazard ye are in; for, though he ſpeaks fair, he means not ſo. Conſider the ſinfulneſs of this toleration; for, the fountain of it is abſolute power, which the granter claims above all laws divine and human; the channel through which it comes, is the taking away of the penal laws: The reſtrictions wherewith it is bounded are ſinful, and the deſign thereof evil: Yea, by this toleration, all the kinds of power that Chriſt hath ſeated in his church, are invalidated, invaded and encroached upon. For,

(1.) The dogmatick power, whereby miniſters are to judge of truth and error in point of doctrine according to the word of God; this power is encroached upon, and this key extorted out of their hands: For according to the proclamation, nothing may be taught by the accepters of the toleration, in their tolerated meetings, that can be interprated by the court, *to alienate the hearts of the people from the granter to the government*; whereby they are bound up, that they may not doctrinally diſcover unto the people the ſins and ſnares of this toleration, or any other ſin of the time.

(2.) The diatactick power, whereby the courts of Chriſt are to diſcern the circumſtances of the worſhip of God, as to time and place, for order, decency, and edification, according to the general rules of the word, this power is invaded: The key of order is wrung out of their hands; for, now the places

ces of worſhip are determined in the royal proclamation, which muſt be made known to ſome of the court patrons, on whoſe warrant they are tied to depend: In the mean time, field-meetings, for the worſhip of God (which have been ſignally countenanced of the Lord) are ſeverely interdicted.

(3) The critic, or corrective power which the courts have to cencure delinquents, and abſolve penitents, according to the word of God, is alſo invaded: For, not only does this toleration rob the miniſters tolerated of this power of impartial cenſuring theſe ſcandals that are tolerated thereby, and all that make themſelves guilty by complying with the ſame, or have been involved in ſinful and ſcandalous compliances formerly: But alſo uſurps this power formarly, inveſting the granter of this authority to diſcharge ſome miniſters the exerciſe of their office, whom the word of God, and laws of this church do authorize; and to allow others, whom the word of God, and conſtitutions of this church, require to be laid aſide, and ſuſpended from that function.

(4) The exauſiaſtick power of trying, ſending, and authorizing office-bearers in the church, is made uſeleſs and void, by this toleration: For, ſuppoſe a miniſter hath his miſſion in Chriſt's orderly appointed way, and never ſo well qualified to exerciſe it, and alſo have the call of the people; yet the ſame is not of any ſignification, except intimation be made, to this exotick power, of their names that are to officiate under this toleration, and they be found ſuch as pleaſe the court patrons.

So now my friends, ye would conſider the ſinfulneſs of this toleration; and as ye would keep yourſelves free of the ſin and ſnares of it, and of the judgments wherewith it will be purſued, ye would keep yourſelves free of it, and of countenancing theſe miniſters who have accepted the ſame; for, they have changed the holding of their miniſtry, and have its dependency upon the courts of men.

9. Conſider the deſolation of the Lord's houſe and ſanctuary, how Zion is laid waſte and her pleaſant places deſolate; the walls of Jeruſalem are broken down, and are robbed of all her pleaſant things! And O! let theſe things affect your hearts; be not at eaſe, or unconcerned, in this day of Zion's trouble.

10. Conſider ſeriouſly how the Lord's anger is burning againſt the land; O! there is much anger incumbent and lying on, and much more wrath impendent, annd hanging over us; therefore prepare for the ſame; flee into Chriſt, the city of refuge: *Enter into your chambers, ſhut the doors about you, and hide yourſelves for a little moment, until the iudignation be overpaſt.*

DOCT. 3. *That theſe who would believe in Chriſt, and be his children, they muſt leave and forſake their own people, and their Father's houſe.*

That is, they muſt forſake every thing they got in their firſt father Adam's houſe, and come to Chriſt, cloſe with him, and embrace him: He invites them to this in the text, *Forget alſo thine own people, and thy father's houſe.*

I. In ſpeaking to this, we ſhall ſhew you what ye ſhould leave and forſake.

1. Ye muſt leave natural ignorance, that old companion that hath kept you company ſince you were born; ye muſt leave that and come to Chriſt for light; for, by nature ye are ignorant of God, of Chriſt, and of yourſelves; of heaven, and the way to it: O! forſake your ignorance; reſt not till ye have it to ſay, *Sometimes ye were darkneſs, but now ye are light in the Lord*, Eph. v. 8.

2. Ye muſt leave your unwillingneſs, another companion ye got in your father's houſe; for by nature the will is perverſe, only inclined to evil, and cannot will that which is ſpiritually good: O! labour to get this removed; come to Chriſt and get your wills ſubdued and inclined to that which is ſpiritual, and that he may make you *a willing people in the day of his power*, Pſal. cx. 3.

3. Ye muſt forſake your unbelief, another old companion; this is a brat begotten betwixt the other two, to wit, ignorance and unwillingneſs: O! get that removed; believe in Chriſt; and remember that without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, Heb. xi. 6.

4. Ye muſt forſake your worldly wiſdom; the natural man looks upon religion as fooliſhneſs, and a fancy; and to be religious, is but a poor ſad melancholy life. But, O! the believers in Chriſt, thoſe who have their eyes enlightned, and diſcern things ſpiritually, they will ſee it a far other thing; they will ſee it to be the power of God, and the wiſdom of God; they will look upon it to be no fancy, but a real buſineſs; and that it is not a ſad melancholy life to be religious, but a moſt pleaſant and ſweet life: *They count one day in the courts of God, better than a thouſand*, Pſal lxxxiv. 10. The noble Gallacius, marquiſs of Vico, it is ſaid of him, "that "it was one of the means of his converſion, when he heard "a miniſter preach how the world looked upon religion as "folly and a fancy, and yet what reality, harmony, and "pleaſantneſs was in it; for, ſaid the miniſter, the profeſſors "of the goſpel are like a people dancing, and keeping order to "ſweet harmonious muſick:" When this is ſeen at a diſtance by any, they think them mad and diſtracted, but when they come nearer, and ſee what order they keep in dancing, and what concord is in the muſick, they change their minds:

And

And even ſo it is with the profeſſors of religion, when the blind world ſees them at a diſtance, they count them diſtracted; but any that comes nearer, they will ſee and obſerve a ſweet pleaſant order, harmony, and concord, and then they change their thoughts.

5. Ye muſt leave your covetouſneſs; ye muſt forſake your worldly-mindedneſs, which naturally ye are addicted to; ye muſt leave all theſe and come to Chriſt: In a word, ye muſt leave all ye got in your firſt father Adam's houſe; all ye had in that family, ye muſt forſake: Ye muſt leave your idols, your corruptions, your predominant luſts, theſe old companions, who were greater, higher, and ſtronger than the reſt, ye muſt leave all theſe and come to Chriſt.

II. Now, it may be aſked, that ſince we are to leave ſo much in coming to Chriſt, What ſhall we get when we are come? O my friends! If ye will forget your own people and father's houſe; if ye would leave theſe your old companions and come to Chrſt, cloſe with him, and embrace him, ye ſhall get much more than ye left: For,

1. Ye ſhall be taken into a new family, even Chriſt's family: Ye ſhall get a new head and huſband, even Chriſt: Ye ſhall get a new inheritance, and new companions, yea, every thing new; and all theſe much more deſirable and excellent than the old.

2. Ye ſhall be made beautiful; for, by nature, ye are all unclean and defiled: Ye ſhall be made all glorious within, and your cloathing of wrought gold: You ſhall be made beautiful through Chriſt's comelineſs.

3. And being made ſo beautiful through his comelineſs, he will greatly delight in your beauty: O! what a wonder is this, that though the poor believer hath no beauty of his own, being only adorned with Chriſt's comelineſs, yet he will greatly delight in its beauty, as if it were its own?

4. As Chriſt will have a common intereſt in you, and all that is yours; ſo ye will have a common intereſt in him, and all that is his: Ye may ſweetly travel through all his attributes, view and behold them, and make uſe of them as your own.

5. Ye ſhall have that ſweet companion, *Peace of conſcience (that peace which paſſeth all underſtanding*, Phil. iv. 7.) to follow you: This the wicked man wants, though he may have the enjoyment of never ſo much of the world, yet there is a bitter root and ſting in them all.

6. You ſhall have your ſtate changed from a ſtate of miſery, to a ſtate of happineſs; from death to life; from darkneſs to light: Yea, ye ſhall get more than tongue can expreſs If I had the tongue of angels and men, I could not get expreſſions

to

to hold forth what ye ſhall get, what a life ye ſhall have; *for eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him,* 1 Cor. ii. 9. O therefore! come and embrace Chriſt; leave all your own things, and cloſe with him.

Let us pray.

SERMON XLIII.

Preached in the ſhire of Fife, January 27th, 1688.

LUKE xii. 32.

Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.

OUR bleſſed Lord Jeſus, knowing that his diſciples and followers, were to meet with many diſcouragements in their way to heaven, he labours to comfort them, that they might not faint in the way, by forbidding them to fear, as the words read hold forth.

To explain the words a little, I ſhall ſhew,

I. How the word fear, in ſcripture, hath divers acceptations.

II. Shew you ſeveral ſorts of fear. And then,

III. Raiſe ſome doctrines from the words, and proſecute them a little.

I. For the firſt of theſe, the word fear in ſcripture, hath divers acceptations. As,

1. It is put for God himſelf, Gen. xxxi. 5. *And Jacob ſware by the fear of his father Iſaac:* That is, God, whom his father Iſaac feared.

2. It is put for religion and piety? Job iv. 6. *Is not this thy fear.* Heb v. 7. *And was heard in that he feared.*

3. It is put for the worſhip and ſervice of God. Deut. vi. 13. *Thou ſhalt fear the Lord thy God, and ſerve him, and ſhalt ſwear by his name:* That is, ſerve and worſhip him, Deut. x 20.

4 It is put for the doctrine of the word, Pſal. xix. 9. *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever:* That is, the doctrine of the Lord is clean and pure.

5. It

5. It is put for the thing feared, Prov. i. 26. *I will mock when your fear cometh.* Iſa. lxvi. 4. *And will bring their fears upon them.*

6. It is put for doubting, Ruth. iii. 11. *And now my daughter fear not, I will do thee all that thou requireſt.* That is, doubt not my daughter.

7. It is put for terror, Gen. xxxiv. 5. *And the terror of God was upon the cities, that were round about them,* 1 Sam. xi. 7. *And the fear of the Lord fell on the people, and they came out with one conſent.*

8 It is put for reverence, Rom. xiii. 7. *Fear to whom fear.* Eph. vi. 5.——*With fear and trembling.*

II. The ſecond thing is to ſhew you that there are ſeveral ſorts of fear. As,

1. Natural fear; and every man and woman hath ſomething of this: It is not ſinful, except it exceed the due bounds: And it is thought that our Saviour Chriſt had ſome of this fear, when he did ſweat great drops of blood in the garden. And it was no wonder, for he had almighty weight upon him, even the ſins of all the elect, that would have cruſhed millions of worlds, of angels and men to nothing.

2. There is a divine fear, whereby the Lord's people fear him, and fear to offend and ſin againſt him.

3. There is a ſlaviſh fear; and that is, when man, or any other creature, is feared too much.

4. A civil fear, which is due to magiſtrates, and other ſuperiors, by their inferiors, Rom. xiii. 7. *Fear to whom fear.*

5. There is an idolatrous fear, and that is, when any idol is feared, as if it could do any thing, 2 Kings xvii. 7.—*And had feared other Gods.*

6. There is a deviliſh fear, and that is, when people fear the devil, and ſerve him, as many of the poor Indians do.

Now, I ſhall come to ſome doctrines from the words: And the firſt I lay down is this;

DOCT. 1. *That believers in Chriſt are but few.* For, in the text, they are called a little flock; *Fear not little flock.* And,

1. They are few, and little comparatively, or in compariſon of the reſt of the world; they are but a little flock, in reſpect of the vaſt multitudes, body, and bulk of the reprobates, who believe not in him: Yet they are a great flock, a glorious and noble company.

2. They are little in the world's eſtimation; the world deſpiſeth and thinks little of them; the world thinks religion but a fancy, and counts the profeſſors thereof fools: But they are far beguiled, for religion is a real thing, and the true profeſſors are only wiſe.

3. They

3. They are little in their own eyes; the ſight of ſin, and of their own unworthineſs in themſelves, keeps them humble in their own eyes.

But for application. Since it is ſo, that Chriſt's followers are few, it may teach us.

1. Not to ſtumble at religion, nor offend at the way and cauſe of God, though the ſame be deſpiſed and lightly eſteemed, and the owners of it but few. O! ſtumble not at the way of God; though his wicked hate it, offend not at the cauſe, though theſe that own it be but few, and theſe few very mean and deſpicable in the world's eyes, and in their own eyes alſo; and though they be perſecuted at this day, yet the cauſe is the Lord's. Religion is no fancy, but a real thing, though Chriſt's flock be but a little flock.

2. It ſhould teach us humility, we ought not to be high-minded: As Chriſt's followers are little in the world's eyes, ſo ſhould they be in their own: If ye be humble, then ye are right; and if ye would be right then ye ſhould be humble. O! be not proud; humble yourſelves, and in due time the Lord will exalt you, and lift you up.

DOCT. 2. *That believers in Chriſt, that are his little flock, have a kingdom given them.*

For ſo ſays the text, *It is your father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* And, O! it is a noble and glorious kingdom; becauſe it is a purchaſed kingdom; Chriſt paid no leſs for it, than the price of his precious blood: I ſay, he hath purchaſed, provided, and prepared it for them, John xiv. 2. *In my Father's houſe are many manſions, if it were not ſo, I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you.*

For *Uſe* then. Seeing that is ſo, that the Lord's people have ſuch a glorious kingdom to look for, then,

1. They ſhould not be carnal and worldly-minded; they ſhould not be taken up with the things of the world, that are periſhing; their affections ſhould be ſet on things above, and not on things in the earth: *That which is ſeen is temporal; but the things which are not ſeen are eternal.* Let your thoughts be often in heaven, and your converſation much with heaven. O my friends! Believers ſhould be of ſo noble ſpirits, that ſeeing they are all kings, and have a crown and a kingdom to look to, they ſhould diſdain to be taken up exceſſively with time-things, and to be encumbered with that which is ſo periſhing; but be heavenly minded. A king's ſon will think it below him, to be taken up with trifles, when he hath greater things to look to.

2. Seeing believers have a kingdom prepared for them, then they ſhould long to be out of the vale of ſin and miſery, and from this miſerable world, that they may he poſſeſſed of ſuch a glorious kingdom; yet they ſhould not deſire to be gone, becauſe

becauſe of the afflictions, trials, and troubles, that attend them while here, but they may lawfully deſire to die, when ready; and the ſame flows only from a deſire to be freed from a body of ſin and death: Or from a longing to have the full and free enjoyment of Chriſt without intermiſſion; and to behold his face without interruption, diſtraction, or fear of ſinning: For, while in the body, they are abſent from the Lord; and ſo, ſometimes they would rather deſire to be out of the body, that they may be preſent with the Lord.

DOCT. 3. *That though believers have a kingdom provided for them, yet it is only the Father's good pleaſure that he gives them it.*

There is nothing in them that merits the ſame or moves him to give it: The text ſays, *It is the Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.* So that it doth not depend upon the creature's will and pleaſure, whether he may get heaven or not, Eph. i. 5. *Having predeſtinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jeſus Chriſt, to himſelf according to the good pleaſure of his will.*

Now for *Uſe.* This may reprove,

1. Papiſts and Arminians. It reproves Papiſts, who ſeek juſtification by works; and think to merit heaven by their own good works. O! ſuch would remember, that it is only of the Father's good pleaſure that any get the kingdom: So then, free grace only muſt be exalted, and proud nature laid low. And it reproves Arminians, who exalt the will of man, above the will and pleaſure of God; who ſay, that the getting of heaven depends upon the will of man, and not upon the will and pleaſure of God: And that it depends upon their own will, and not upon the good pleaſure of the Father. O! what a great iniquity is this, thus to exalt the will of the poor creature, and to abaſe the will of the great Creator? Such ſhould remember, that the text ſays, *It is the Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom*, and that the will of man by nature is crooked and perverſe, and only inclined to evil, and ſo cannot will that which is ſpiritually good.

2. It reproves theſe who go about to eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and think to get heaven that way; many who will not be called Papiſts do this; yet they reſt upon their duties, upon their prayers, and upon their ſufferings, and ſeek to have the kingdom this way: But this is not the way. O! remember, that *it is your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom:* Quit your own righteouſneſs; be denied to yourſelves; come to Chriſt and reſt upon him only, and alone for ſalvation, and let him have all the glory.

DOCT. 4. *That theſe would have a right to, and expect to be poſſeſſors of that glorious kingdom; which is the Father's good pleaſure to give to the little flock; they muſt be his children, by being true believer's, otherwiſe they cannot win there.* The

text ſays, *It is the Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom.*

So he muſt be their father, and they muſt be his children, if ever they expect to be inhabitants of that glorious kingdom.

1. They muſt be his children by adoption; they muſt be brought and taken into his family; for there are none born children in it by nature; for, all are by nature heirs of hell, and children of wrath; and when they are made his children, he adopts, and brings them into his family, making them his own: This is an act of his free grace.

2. They muſt be his children by regeneration, John iii. 3. *Verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God.* They muſt be changed and renewed; all the faculties of the ſoul muſt be changed and renewed, as to their qualifications, and the members of their body as to their uſe. Their underſtanding muſt be ſavingly enlightned and renewed, which before was darkned, ſo that now they can diſcern things in a ſpiritual manner; and they get a ſight of, and take up Chriſt aright, as he is offered in the goſpel: Their affections muſt be renewed; their love which formerly went out after vanities, ſin and the world, is now changed and made to run out after Chriſt, after holineſs, and after heaven. Their will, which by nature, is perverſe and rebellious, muſt be likewiſe changed, and made to delight in the ways of God, and willingly to cloſe with Chriſt, and cheerfully to obey his commandments. As alſo, all the members of the body are renewed, as to their uſe, formerly they ſerved ſin and Satan: But being changed they ſerve the Lord; they deſire to be for him, and to live to his glory. His name is now precious, and his concerns ſavoury to them.

Now, for *Uſe*. My friends, let it be your ſtudy to be his children: O labour to be his children, both by adoption and regeneration; for thereby your bleſſings ſhall be great, and your privileges many: As,

1. If ye be the children of God, ye ſhall get protection from your father; O! is not this a great privilege? Ye ſhall get protection from all evil, both of ſin and miſery.

2. Ye ſhall have the privilege of proviſion from him: He will provide both for ſoul and body; ye ſhall not want any good thing.

3. If ye be his children, ye ſhall get fatherly correction from him: He will chaſtiſe you for your faults, for your good, that he may not ſuffer you to go on in ſin, which is a great privilege.

4. Ye ſhall have the privilege of having your prayers heard.

5. If ye be the children of God, ye ſhall have the privilege of a right and title to the kingdom of heaven: And, O! what a great privilege is that?

Here

Here it may be enquired, what are the marks of the children of God? Or, how ſhall one know whether they be one of the children of God or not?

Anſ. There might be many marks of this given from ſcripture; but I ſhall only give you theſe few at the time.

1. Theſe who are the children of God, it will be their aim and endeavour, to yield univerſal obedience to all their father's commands; not baulking any, becauſe unpleaſant to their nature; or obeying ſome, and ſlighting the reſt: But as it is their deſire to mourn for, hate, and forſake every ſin, ſo it will be their endeavour to obey all the Lord's commands. The Pſalmiſt ſays, Pſal. lxvi. 18. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* This ſays that he did not regard iniquity in his heart, but was an obedient ſon who obeyed all his father's commands.

2. Theſe who are the children of God, they will honour their father: They will greatly reverence him, and fear before him: It will be their great deſire to glorify him, and to have him exalted, Mal. i. 6. *A ſon honoureth his father, and a ſervant his maſter: If then I be a father where is mine honour?*

3. Theſe who are the children of God, will have a high eſtimation of their elder brother Chriſt; he will be lovely in their eyes, and altogether deſirable to their ſouls, according to that word, 1 Pet. ii. 7. *Unto you therefore which believe, he is precious.*

4. They put a high eſtimation upon the ſtate of the reconciliation with God: They count this ſtate of his children, to be among the only bleſſed and happieſt of conditions: As the Pſalmiſt ſays, Pſal. xxxii. 1, 2. *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſions is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered. Bleſſed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whoſe ſpirit there is no guile.*

5. Theſe who are the children of God, ſubject their ſpirit unto their father, endeavouring to be for him, and at his diſpoſal; putting a blank in his hand, chearfully acquieſcing to what he carves out to be their lot; and with patience and ſubmiſſion to embrace it, though hard to fleſh and blood, without murmuring at his way of dealing with them, or their hearts riſing againſt his ſovereignty, or quarrelling with his way of proccedure with them.

DOCT. 5. *That theſe who are believers in Chriſt, his little flock, ſhould not be poſſeſſed with ſlaviſh fear. Fear not little flock.*

There are ſome things that the Lord's people are readily feared for, which yet they have no ground for. As,

1. They fear the loſs of the things of the world; but this they ſhould not fear, Pſal. xxxiv 10. *The young lions do lack, and ſuffer hunger; but they that fear the Lord ſhall not want any good thing.* O! let not the fear of the loſs of the world

fear you; for, theſe who fear the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing.

2. They fear the revolutions, and overturnings that fall out in the world; we have ſeen ſome of theſe already: But, O! we may expect more, and greater revolutions, than we have either ſeen or heard: Sad days we may fear are coming. But yet, here is no ground for believers in Chriſt, to be poſſeſſed with ſlaviſh fear. For, *though the earth be removed, and the mountains be caſt into the midſt of the ſea; yet they ſhould not fear, for God is their refuge; a preſent help in the time of trouble*, Pſal. xlv. 1, 2. O! they may ſit, Noah-like, in the midſt of the flood, and be ſafe; becauſe they are in the ark, where there is no fear of drowning.

3. They oft times fear man, and this brings a ſnare: As, alas! it hath done this day. Many of you, through the ſlaviſh fear of man, have complyed with the enemies, ſo as to hear the curates, pay the enemies wicked impoſitions, and ſwear, and ſubſcribe ſinful oaths and bonds. O! mourn for theſe things, and turn unto the Lord. Let not this ſlaviſh fear of man poſſeſs your hearts. Fear no man: *Fear not him that can kill the body; but rather fear him, who is able to deſtroy both ſoul and body in hell.*

4. They fear death: This is a terror to them; but this they ſhould not fear; for, if they looked rightly upon it, they would welcome it, when it comes, as a deſirable meſſenger; for, it is a chariot to carry them out of this miſerable world, unto their father's kingdom; where they ſhall enjoy their beloved fully and freely. They ſhould invert Ahab's words, *Haſt thou found me, O mine enemy?* And ſay unto death, *Haſt thou found me, O my friend?*

There are ſeveral diſadvantages, that the true believer hath, when this ſlaviſh fear predominates. As,

(1.) It is a tormenting thing; for where this fear is great, there is always torment. It is better to have the boots without this fear, than to have this fear without the boots.

(2.) It weakens the ſoul in going about duties, Zeph. iii. 16. *In that day it ſhall be ſaid to Jeruſalem, Fear thou not: And to Zion, Let not thine hands be ſlack.* From which we may ſee, that this ſlaviſh fear, and a ſlack-handedneſs in duties, go together: As when the Lord promiſes it ſhould be ſaid to his people, fear not; ſo it ſhould be ſaid to them, let not thine hands be ſlack.

(3) Where this fear predominates, it is an evidence of little grace. I ſhall not ſay, but where this fear is, the perſon may have grace, but it is evident, that at that time, it is not very ſtrong and lively, Matth. viii. 26. *And he ſaith unto them, why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* Theſe in whom this fear ſo far predomines, as to make them fall from a general profeſſion

of

of the Lord, and to fall totally and finally away from him; it is a mark that they never had grace: But in whom it predomines for a time, through a violent fit of temptation, ſo as to make them to fall into ſome ſins, if they repent, it evidences that grace in them is but weak.

In the next place, I ſhall ſhew you ſome helps, to help you to guard againſt this fear.

1. Labour to be more and more denied to the things of the world; looſe your affections from the things thereof; let it be your ſtudy to be like the woman, as ſhe is nobly pourtrayed; being *cloathed with the ſun, and the moon under her feet*, Rev. xii. 1. O! labour to be cloathed with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and to the get the moon, and the vain and changeable world under your feet. O! fear not the loſs of the world's trifles, or your through-bearing in it.

2. Labour to get faith, and to keep it in exerciſe, and this will help to guard againſt this ſlaviſh fear; for it will help you to read diſpenſations, though croſs and angry like, aright: It will let you ſee the in-ſide of the cloud to be white, though the out-ſide be black: It will prove a ſtay to you in all your tribulations. O therefore get it, and keep it lively and in exerciſe!

3. Labour alſo for the grace of love, and have it alſo in exerciſe. Labour to have it ſhed abroad in your hearts, and your ſouls filled with it, 1 John iv 18. *There is no fear in love: But perfect love caſteth out fear.*

Now, my friends, guard againſt this ſlaviſh fear; let it not have the poſſeſſion of your hearts: And to preſs you to this conſider.

(1.) It is the command of Chriſt, that ye ſhould not let your hearts be poſſeſſed with it: *Fear not little flock:* And let that have weight with you, to guard againſt it.

(2.) Let the diſadvantages that are in it, make you to guard againſt it: It is a tormenting thing and it weakens your hands in duty.

SERMON

SERMON XLIV.

Being the Author's laſt Sermon; preached at Borrowſtonneſs, January 29th, 1688.

ISAIAH liii. 1.

Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

THIS chapter contains a prophecy of Chriſt, and of the great ſufferings he was to undergo, for the redemption of poor ſinners. And the prophet begins with a ſad complaint, that neither the report which he gave of Chriſt, would be believed by many, nor yet the report that Chriſt would give of himſelf; and that though the arm of the Lord was, and ſhould be revealed wonderfully, yet the ſame was not nor would not be taken head to by the generality.

To explain the words a little, I ſhall ſhew you,

I. The various ſignifications the word, believe, hath in ſcripture: As,

1. It ſignifies to give credit to God's word, 1 John v. 10. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, becauſe he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son.*

2. It ſignifies to aſſent barely to goſpel truths, Acts viii. 13. *Then Simon himſelf believed alſo:* That is, he aſſented to the truth of the goſpel in his mind, but did not give the conſent of his will; for *he was in the gall of bitterneſs and in the bond of iniquity.* Even ſo, when the word comes with light, perſpicuity, and power, it may ſo far gain upon the conſcience, as to get the aſſent of the mind and underſtanding, to the truth and veracity of what is ſpoken, that it hath nothing to object againſt it; while yet, neither the heart is broken, the will renewed, nor the affections changed, and ſo Chriſt is not embraced as offered in the goſpel; ſo my friends, ye muſt have more than this, ye muſt not only give the aſſent of the mind, but alſo the conſent of the will, to the truth of the goſpel.

3. It ſignifies to know, John xvii. 23. *That the world may know that thou haſt ſent me.* The devils win this length; they know that there is a God; that Chriſt died for ſinners, and that

that there is ſalvation through his blood, James ii. 19. *The devils alſo believe and tremble.*

4. It ſignifies to be fully perſuaded and aſſured of the certainty of a thing, Luke i. 45. *And, bleſſed is ſhe that believeth, for there ſhall be a performanee of theſe things, which were told her from the Lord.*

5. It ſignifies to expect, or hope for a thing, Pſal. xxvii. 33. *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed, to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord, in the land of the living.*

6. It ſignifies to receive, and cloſe with Chriſt, as he is offered in the goſpel, John i. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the ſons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* This is, when the ſoul makes a fiducial application of Chriſt, and of the promiſes to itſelf; this is true ſaving and juſtifying faith.

This believing ſpoken of in the text, may have a relation to all theſe various ſignifications. The prophet might complain, and miniſters may complain, that credit is not given to the word of God; that the aſſent of the mind, nor conſent of the will is not given to the truths of the goſpel; that people do not know; that they are not fully perſuaded; that they do not hope; that Chriſt is not received. But the chief thing meant by this, *Who hath believed our report?* is, that Chriſt was not received, cloſed with and embraced.

II. The word arm, hath alſo divers ſignifications in ſcripture. As,

1. It is taken for the natural arm, 2 Sam. i. 10. *And I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm.*

2. It ſignifies outward ſtrength, 2 Chron. xxxii. 8.——*With him is an arm of fleſh.* Pſalm x. 15. *Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man.*

3. It ſignifies the power of God; even the power whereby he made heaven and earth, Jer. xxvii. 5. *I have made the earth, the man and the beaſt, that are upon the ground, by my great power, and by my ſtretched out arm.* See alſo Jer. xxxii. 17.

4. It ſignifies the goſpel; which ſignification it hath here in the text. So, the prophet here complains, that although the arm of the Lord was revealed, in the diſcovery of Chriſt in the goſpel and of ſalvation holden forth therein, to be had in and through him, yet the report thereof was not, nor would not be believed as it ought.

Now, I come to the doctrines.

Doct. 1. *That oftimes the miniſters of Chriſt have it, for the matter of their complant, that the meſſage and charge, which they have in commiſſion from him, is not believed, nor the report thereof credited.*

This

This was the prophets complaint here, and it hath been the complaint of miniſters of the goſpel in all ages; and it may be our complaint this day. Alas! the profeſſors of Scotland have not believed the report of that which miniſters have had in commiſſion from Chriſt to tell them; they have not credited it, though they have been in earneſt, in telling them the ſame.

In proſecution of this doctrine, I ſhall ſhew you ſome things which the miniſters in this land have declared unto the people, which they had in commiſſion from him; but, alas! as the report of the ſame hath not been believed by the generality, though the arm of the Lord hath been revealed, yet the ſame hath not been taken heed unto, nor what was ſaid credited by the moſt part.

1. This hath been declared unto you, by the faithful miniſters of Chriſt, the ſinfulneſs and miſery of your natural eſtate, and the great danger of continuing in the ſame. It hath been told you, that ye were born in a miſerable eſtate; in an eſtate of enmity againſt God; heirs of hell, and children of wrath; and yet the moſt part have not, nor do not believe it: Ye do not credit this report, though it hath been often, again and again told you. All ye who are not ſenſible of, and weighted under the ſenſe of this lamentable and ſad ſtate, and ſeek not the right way out of it; ye have not believed this report; and for this, ye will inevitably periſh.

2. This hath been told you, your own impotency, to deliver yourſelves out of that miſerable eſtate. Hath it not been told you, that all that ye could do in this caſe, would be to no purpoſe, without faith in Chriſt? For, by nature, ye are not only unable, but unwilling to be delivered out of that eſtate; ſo, ſuppoſe ye never did ſo much in your own ſtrength, it would be but as rotten rags, and the ſpider's web: For, all ye who have not fled to Chriſt by faith for deliverance out of this eſtate, and cloſed with him; but have gone about to make a Saviour of your duties, and to eſtabliſh your own righteouſneſs, or put any thing in Chriſt's room, ye have not believed this report.

3. This hath been ſhown unto you, that not only ye were unable to deliver yourſelves, out of that miſerable eſtate that ye are in by nature, but alſo unworthy that any ſhould do it for you: It hath been told you how unworthy ye were of ſalvation, which ſhould have humbled you, and broken you in yourſelves. But all ye who are not humbled under the ſenſe of your ſin, and of your unworthineſs, and think yourſelves worthy of ſalvation and of heaven, more worthy than others, ye have not believed this report. O! be convinced of your ſin and miſery, and let the ſenſe thereof humble you; and look upon yourſelves as unworthy of ſalvation.

4. This

4. This hath been declared unto you by the faithful ambaſſadors of Chriſt, that although, ye were unable to deliver yourſelves out of that ſad eſtate, that by nature ye are in, and the inſufficiency of all your duties, or the endeavour of any other creature for that end, and that ye are unworthy to be delivered, yet there was a Saviour and a Redeemer provided, even Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God. Hath it not been told you, that *faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners*, 1 Tim. i 15. And that he is an all ſufficient and well-furniſhed Saviour, *able to ſave to the uttermoſt, all that come to God through him?* Heb. vii. 35. But all ye who have not fled out of yourſelves, into Jeſus Chriſt, and have not believed in him, nor laid hold upon him for ſalvation, and to whom he is not precious, have not believed this great report, that hath been often ſhown unto you, *viz.* That your eternal ſalvation dependeth thereon. O! believe this ſure report, that Chriſt is an all-ſufficient Saviour. O! therefore believe in him: he is able to ſave you.

5. It hath been told you the neceſſity of an actual cloſing with Chriſt, in the terms of the goſpel, as your Prophet, Prieſt, and King. It hath been declared unto you, that ye muſt enter into covenant, cloſe with and embrace him, as your own; and that ye were to give away yourſelves to him, to be his and for him, and yet this hath not been believed by many of you: For, all you, who are ſerving other lords, and have not forſaken your ſins, luſts, and idols, have not actually cloſed with him, in the terms he offereth himſelf; nor have ye covenanted with him; and have not given away yourſelves and all you have unto him, to be his, and for him, and at his diſpoſal: Ye have not given credit to this report.

6. It hath been preached unto you, the neceſſity of heart-holineſs, and the need ye had, to have your heart, as well as your ways changed, and cleanſed; and that ye ſhould purify your hearts from all your luſts and idols The want of this hath been provoking unto the Lord. And hath not this been told you? O Jeruſalem, *waſh thine heart from wickedneſs, that thou mayeſt be ſaved: How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. iv. 14. But the report of this hath not been credited by the moſt part; for all ye who have not made it your exerciſe, to ſet about the work of mortification, and have not made ſanctification and heart-holineſs your ſtudy, you have not believed this report.

7. Miniſters have preached unto you the neceſſity of a goſpel holy converſation, called for at your hands, as well as heart-holineſs, that ye were to ſtudy a holy perſonal walk, ſuiting your profeſſion: But, oh! this hath not been believed by the generality; for all ye who are ſcandalous in your perſonal walk, ye who have not exerciſed yourſelves, in having a

converſation ſuiting the goſpel, ye have not believed the report of this. O! my friends, labour for heart holineſs, for heart religion. Let your converſation be as becometh the goſpel.

8. The faithful miniſters of Chriſt have preached and declared unto you, the ſinfulneſs of the times abominations, and of the land's defections; and the ſad compliance with enemies, that the generality have been involved in. Have they not declared unto you, the ſinfulneſs of hearing the curates? *&c* But all ye who have countenanced them, have not believed this report? Hath not the ſinfulneſs of paying the ceſs and locality been preached unto you, and yet all ye who have payed it, have not believed this report. Hath not the ſinfulneſs of the wicked oaths and bonds, impoſed upon the conſcience of poor people, been declared unto you? Yet all ye who have ſworn, or taken any of them, have not believed this report. Likewiſe, hath not the ſin, ſnare and danger of this Antichriſtian toleration, been declared unto many of you? yet all ye who go on to countenance the ſame, ye do not believe this report. And now, this night, I give you warning of the ſin, ſnare, and danger, of it, ſo that ye would have nothing to do with it: For, a toleration is always of evil, ſeeing that which is good cannot be tolerated, but ought freely to be owned and countenanced as ſuch. A toleration is expreſly contrary to ſcripture. To give toleration to idolatry is a great iniquity. Iſrael was commanded to deſtroy their altars, break down their images, cut down their groves, and to burn their graven images with fire, Deut. vii. 5. This was far from tolerating of them. A toleration is contrary to the acts and conſtitutions of this church, and to the faithful warnings of the general aſſemblies thereof; and it is contrary to our covenants, which, alas! are now like to be buried, by the accepters of this toleration. And, as tolerations in general are evil, ſo this preſent toleration is evil and ſinful. The foundation thereof is abſolute power, which the granter blaſphemouſly arrogates to himſelf: It runs through ſuch a channel, as diſables and ſuſpends our laws againſt idolatry. The reſtrictions are ſuch, as a miniſter cannot accept of, if he would reſolve to give the people faithful warning of the ſin and duty of the day. And theſe who are accepters of this liberty, they change the holding of their miniſtry, and depend for it, upon the courts of men. And the deſign of granting it is wicked, even no leſs than to introduce idolatry. So my friends, I would give you warning not to countenance it: Have nothing to do with it; do not countenance nor hear them, who have embraced and accepted it, as ye would be free of its ſin, and not ſhare in the judgment wherewith it is to be purſued.

Now, I ſhall anſwer ſome objections concerning it.

Object.

Object. 1. Some of you will ſay, "They are good men, "who have accepted and embraced this toleration, and why "may not we then hear them?"

Anſ. I grant that many of them are godly and gracious men, but their accepting of this Antichriſtian liberty, is no part of their godlineſs. They muſt not be countenanced in their ſin, tho' they were never ſo godly; for their being ſo, makes their ſin the more heinous: I ſhall ſay that word, 2 Cor. iii 12. 15. *Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, ſilver, and precious ſtone, wood, hay, ſtuble: If any man's work ſhall be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, but he himſelf ſhall be ſaved, yet ſo as by fire.* Though the Lord may pardon their iniquities, and give them their ſoul for a prey, yet he will take vengeance on their inventions.

Object. 2. Some may ſay, "It is a great mercy to have li-"berty to preach the goſpel; and having ſuch a liberty, ſhould "we not make uſe of it?"

Anſ. I grant it is a great mercy to have the goſpel preached with freedom; and when we have it ſo, we ought rightly to improve it; but, I deny that the preſent liberty is ſuch, for, by it the goſpel is in great bondage, and truth in more thraldom than before it was granted, though the perſons of ſuch men as accept it, have ſome more liberty; for it is ſuch a liberty as comes from the fountain of abſolute power, which is the alone incommunicable prerogative of JEHOVAH; yet the granter of this liberty takes this to himſelf, and requires all his ſubjects to obſerve it without reſerve: And the accepters of this liberty do recognoſce ſuch a power in him who grants it by accepting this liberty; yea, it is ſuch a liberty, that it diſables all our penal laws againſt papiſts, and takes of the legal bulwark, which our religion hath: And it is ſuch a liberty as reſtricts miniſters in their doctrine; for they are thereby enjoined, that they preach nothing, that may any ways tend to alienate the hearts of the people from the granter, or his government. It is ſuch a liberty, that thoſe who accept of it, do change the holding of their miniſtry, which they profeſſed they had from Chriſt, and make it to have its dependency upon the courts of men; for, ſuppoſe a miniſter be orderly called and ordained, and have never ſo good qualifications, and alſo the call of the people, yet he cannot preach in any place, unleſs he give up his name to ſome of the counſellors or ſheriffs, *&c.* and they be pleaſed with him. It is ſuch a liberty, which hath, for the deſign of its granting, the bringing in of idolatry into the land again; and the accepters and embracers of it do co-operate with the deſign of granting it, by their accepting thereof. And it is ſuch a liberty, as hardens enemies in their wickedneſs, and backſliders in their defection; and ſo it offends many of the godly at home, and

proves offenſive and ſtumbling to the churches abroad, who cannot but think, by this, that Scotland, who was once ſo famous for its zeal againſt Antichriſt, is now in a fair way of reconciliation with him, when it hath embraced a liberty granted by his vaſſal, the deſign whereof, is to introduce idolatry into the land again. Now, in conſideration of theſe things, ye may ſee it is ſinful to accept of, or countenance ſuch a ſinful liberty.

Object. 3. Some may ſay, "What ſhall we do then? Better that we hear theſe who have accepted this liberty, than to hear none."

Anſ. It is greatly your duty to hear any faithful miniſter, whenever you can have the opportunity; but it doth not follow, that ye ſhould hear the accepters of this woful liberty; for in the circumſtances that we ſtand in, we cannot do it without ſin: For we are commanded to *ceaſe to hear the inſtruction that cauſeth to err from the words of knowledge*, Prov. xix. 27. And when we cannot get a faithful miniſter to hear, we ſhould make uſe of the means the Lord hath left us, we ſhould mourn and lament for this want, and long to have it again. If ye would abſtain from countenancing the accepters of this liberty, one of theſe two ſhould follow; either ſeek that they ſhould be convinced of ſuch a ſinful courſe, and forſake it; or elſe, that the Lord would raiſe up faithful miniſters, whom ye might hear, and whom he would countenance.

Object. 4. Some may ſay, "Is it not better to take a part, than to want all? If we were aſſaulted by a robber for our purſe, is it not better to give him a part, than to let him take all? Though enemies will not ſuffer miniſters to make application of their doctrine, yet they gave them liberty to preach, ſhould we not then be content with that?"

Anſ. I ſhall not debate, what a man may do when aſſaulted by a robber for his purſe, *&c.* ſeeing, in many caſes a man may do with his own what he pleaſeth; but he may not do ſo in the matters of God: He muſt not come and go in the matters of God; for in theſe we ſhould hold faſt, and let nothing go, ſeeing they are our own. And a miniſter, that would be faithful to his Maſter, and free of the blood of ſouls, ſhould, and muſt make particular application of his doctrine, to the ſins, ſnares, duties, and dangers of the time, whoever be offended. For oftentimes the life of preaching lies in the application of the doctrine.

Object. 5. Some may ſay, "Should we not hear them, that we may be edified thereby?"

Anſ. It is a matter of ſorrow and regret, that ſo few are edified, even by theſe, who deſire to keep their garments clean to keep the way of God, and to be found faithful to the maſter, in this day of trial and temptation. And, however, ſome

by

by hearing the miniſters who have accepted of this toleration may be edified in providence, yet they have not a promiſe for it; for, there is not a promiſe in all the ſcripture, that God will countenance and bleſs ſuch a wicked courſe. And, if any get edification, in his holy providence, it will be theſe who come in the ſincerity of their ſoul, not knowing nor ſeeing the evil of this liberty; or who are, in a great meaſure, ignorant of the controverſy of the day: But theſe who ſee ſomething of the ſins and ſnares of it, and are not ignorant of the controverſy of the time, may expect but little benefit by them.

9. The faithful miniſters of Chriſt have declared unto you and given you warning, that wrath and deſolations are coming upon the land: Have not ſuch told you, that judgments were coming and haſting? Have they not preached unto you that the Lord's wrath was kindled againſt the land, for the many heinous ſins, and wicked abominations committed therein? But the report of this hath not been believed, nor credited by the moſt part: For, all ye who have not been ſearching out the cauſes of his anger, both in yourſelves and others, or have not been mourning over, and forſaking the ſame, have not believed the report. And all you who have not been preparing for wrath, by entering into your chambers, and ſhutting the doors about you, by fleeing into Chriſt the city of refuge, ye have not believed this report.

But now I come to a ſecond doctrine which is this:

DOCT. 2. *That it is matter of ſorrow and grief to faithful miniſters, when the report of what they preach is not believed.*

This was the matter of the prophet's ſorrow here; and it was Jeremiah's grief, Jer. xiii. 17. *But if ye will not hear it, my ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride; and mine eyes ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe the Lord's flock is carried away captive.* So their ſorrow is great upon theſe accounts.

1. Becauſe Chriſt whom they have preached, is not embraced and believed in.

2. Becauſe the report of the ſcripture is not believed by people: And it is a ſure token of ſad wrath and deſolation approaching, when preaching hath little, or no other effect, than to make the hearts of people more fat, their ears heavy, and to ſhut their eyes, that they neither ſee, hear, nor underſtand, for then may we look for dreadful deſolations; as it is in Iſa. vi. 9, 10, 11, 12. O! this is the great ſin of Scotland. That the report of the goſpel hath not been believed, by the generality of the people; that that which the faithful miniſters of Chriſt, have had in commiſſion from him to tell them, hath not been credited as it ſhould: And what doth this ſay, but that deſolation and wrath is approaching? And happy are they, who are preparing for the ſame.

THE END OF THE SERMONS.

MR. RENWICKS's PREDICTIONS, in a LETTER to MRS. JEAN HAMILTON, dated November 18th, 1685.

I. I THINK we are not yet entred our Jordan; for tho' we have come through a miry and thorny wilderneſs, yet our Jordan is before us; and it will be very deep, but it will not be very broad; when the ark of God enters it, it ſhall be like to drown, but it ſhall ſuddenly and admirably win to the other ſide.

II. I think ſafety ſhall only be to thoſe who have their hands neareſt the ark. Oh then! many a woe to the miniſters and profeſſors, whoſe hands have been drawn back from the work; and they, whoſe malice is againſt the burden-bearers, ſhall be, as it is ſaid, Iſa. xxvi. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not ſee, but they ſhall ſee, and be aſhamed, for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies ſhall devour them.*

III. I think Scotland ſhall be made a waſte land, ere God's controverſies againſt it be ended; he will ſell the heritages of earls and lords, and others; yea, and their carcaſes good cheap.

IV. I think, that the Lord, until he raiſe his work again, will guide and manage it, more by his providences, than by inſtruments, and this is, that his hand alone may be ſeen in it, and that he may get the glory: And what way is moſt glorifying unto him, ſhould it not be moſt pleaſant and rejoicing to us?

V. I think, that when the Lord returns again, it will be with ſuch a meaſure and out pouring of his Spirit, that the remnant that ſhall be left, ſhall have a very heaven upon earth: And our land ſhall be made the joy of all lands.

The

The FORM and ORDER of the ADMISSION of ELDERS, as done by Mr. James Renwick, at Darmead; and Several other Places of the Country where he Laboured.

WE desire thankfully to acknowledge to the Lord's praise, that he did give unto our church, doctrine and policy; having the measuring-line of the sanctuary stretched over the same; so that, we may say, we were once as a wall, made by a plumb-line, Amos vii. 7. Also, we desire to confess it, as our great sin and shame, that our practice hath not been agreeable to our principles, and if weighed in the balance, we will be found too light: For, in these things whereunto we had attained, we have not walked by the same rule, and minded the same things, Phil. iii. 16. Who may not see, that from the corrupt mixtures, in church officers and members, there is a great cause, why so much wrath is gone forth from the Lord, against us, and doth abide upon us? And his way of dealing with Scotland, now for many years, speaks aloud, that his design is, to purge his house, that his ordinances may be pure; and also, his officers and people: But, though he hath been purging us, we refuse to be purged; for every furnace discovers more dross, and every sieve more chaff. There is a perverse spirit in the midst of us, which causeth us to err, in every work, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit; and we eat every man the flesh of his own arm, Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh, and they together are against Judah, Isa. ix. 20, 21. And now, there is, as it were, a conspiracy among all sorts to return to Egypt, to build again the walls of Jericho, and to repair the ruins of Edom.

But that I may come to the purpose; the admission of ruling-elders, in this broken and low state of our church, hath been long delayed, and much impeded: Howbeit, through the good hand of the Lord, we have, after some consultations and disputations, prayer and fasting, fallen upon it; and being now to admit some to this great trust and charge, I shall show, (1.) What is understood in scripture by the name elder. (2.) I shall prove from the word of God, the institution of the ruling elder to be divine. (3.) I shall show what moveth us to admit ruling-elders at this time. (4.) I shall labour to take off what may be objected against our present proceeding. (5) I shall speak of the vocation, or calling of ruling elders. (6.) I shall show their duties, and take the persons, elected and tried, engaged thereunto: and also, speak a word unto the duties whereunto the people are bound.

1. As

1. As to the firſt, the name, elder, in ſcripture, doth ſignify divers things. (1.) It ſignifieth old men, 1 Tim. v. 1. (2.) Theſe who have lived in the times of old, Matth xv. 2. (3.) Honourable and worthy men, Iſa. iii. 2. (4.) It is the name of a ſpiritual officer in the church of Chriſt, Acts xiv. 23. Theſe who bear rule in God's houſe, are called elders; becauſe of the knowledge, gifts, experience, prudence and gravity, wherewith they ought to be endowed. And there are ſeveral ſorts of ſpiritual officers, who in the ſcripture are named elders: The doctors or teaching elders, the miniſters or preaching elders, and the ruling, or governing elders: Theſe three are often, in the new teſtament, compriſed under the general name of elders, Acts xv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 1. It is the ruling elder, whom we have now to do with; who is ſo called, not becauſe the power of ruling and governing the church belongs to him alone; for that belongs alſo to the teaching and preaching elders, or to the doctors and paſtors; but, becauſe to rule and govern, is the principle and chief part of his charge and employment; it is the higheſt act of his office: It is not competent for him to teach, that belongs to the doctor; nor to preach, that belongs to the miniſter, or paſtor: But his office is compriſed within the compaſs of ruling and governing the church: And therefore, (I ſay) he is the governing, or ruling elder: The apoſtle calleth him, *Him that ruleth*, Rom. xii. 8. *and governments*, 1 Cor. xii 28. putting the abſtract for the concrete, governments for governors. Hence,

Then they greatly err, who call them laick-elders, as if they were a part of the people only; and not to be reckoned among the officers of the Lord's houſe; whom the popiſh church in their pride calls the clergy; that is the Lord's inheritance, in oppoſition to the laity, or people, whom they look upon as baſe, and inferior to the other, in worth and excellency: Whereas all the Lord's people are his *portion and the lot of his inheritance*, Deut. xxxii 9. 2 Pet. v 3.

They are alſo in a miſtake, who call theſe only ruling elders, who ſit in preſbyteries, ſynods, and general aſſemblies, allowing others the name of elders, but not ruling-elders: But every elder, in the Lord's houſe, is a ruling-elder; becauſe the power and exerciſe of rule and government belongeth to every elder; though ſome of them, upon ſpecial occaſions, be called to a more eminent exerciſe of it than others.

II. As to the ſecond, I prove from the word of God the inſtitution of the ruling-elder to be divine.

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, upon whoſe ſhoulders the government is, and who is faithful in all his houſe, hath, in his eternal wiſdom, thought fit to appoint ſuch an officer in the

church, for the right and orderly governing thereof. It is true, that by the ſloth, or rather the pride of teachers, whilſt they alone would ſeem to be ſomewhat, and by the policy of Satan, and inadvertancy of the church, theſe officers were, for ſundry ages together, out of uſe in the Chriſtian church. But certain it is, that both the Jewiſh ſynagogue, and thereafter the Chriſtian church, had ſeniores or elders, without whoſe counſel nothing was done in the church. The Jewiſh church had ſuch, as appears from 2 Chron. xix. 8 Jer. xxix. 1. Matth. xvi. 21. And that the Chriſtian church alſo had them, in the primitive and pureſt times thereof, appears from the teſtimony of ancient writers, as Ambroſe, Auguſtine, and others But we have a more ſure word for the divine inſtitution of ruling-elders, in the Chriſtian church; *to wit*, The teſtimony of God in the new teſtament: For clearing whereof, I ſhall adduce two or three ſcriptures.

The firſt is. Rom. xii. 6, 7, 8. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us; whether prophecy, let us propheſie, according to the proportion of faith; or miniſtry, let us wait on our miniſtring; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth let him do it with ſimplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that ſheweth mercy, with cheerfulneſs.* In which text the apoſtle doth firſt comprehend all the ſeveral kinds of all ſtanding officers in the church of God, under two ſeveral heads, *to wit*, prophecy, whereby is meaned, the ordinary faculty of right underſtanding and expounding the ſcriptures; and miniſtry, under which is comprehended, all other church officers and employments. To each of theſe he addeth their general duties, *to wit*. That he who propheſieth, ſhould do it according to the proportion of faith; that is, according to the meaſure of the knowledge of the word of faith, that he hath received of God; and he that miniſters, let him wait on his miniſtring, that is, let him do it faithfully and diligently. Then, he ſubdivides theſe two generals, into the ſpecial officers contained under them; He divides him that propheſieth into, him that teacheth, and him that exhorteth; or, into the doctor, to whom the word of teaching or inſtruction belongs; and the paſtor, to whom the word of exhortation is competent; and under him that miniſtreth, he comprehendeth, him that giveth; and him that ſheweth mercy, by whom is meaned the deacon, who is appointed for the ſupply of the poor; and him that ruleth, by whom can be meaned no other than the ruling-elder, ſeeing an ordinary ruling officer in the church, who is different from the paſtor and teacher, is here ſpoken of by the apoſtle.

The ſecond place of ſcripture is, 1 Cor. xii. 20. *And God hath ſet ſome in the church, firſt apoſtles, ſecondly prophets, third-*

ly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diverſities of tongues. Here Paul reckoneth ſeveral officers of the church, ſome extraordinary, as apoſtles, prophets, powers, or miracles, gifts of healing, kinds of tongues; ſome ordinary, ſuch as teachers, or the ordinary church officers, who are exerciſed in the word; helps, that is the deacons, who are appointed for the help and relief of the poor; and governments, that is, the governing or ruling-elders; for this cannot be any other of the church officers, becauſe theſe he named beſides.

The third place of ſcripture is, 1 Tim. v. 17. *Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour, eſpecially who labour in the word and doctrine.* Which text diſtinguiſheth two ſorts of elders, to whom Chriſt hath committed the power of ruling: One ſort, who do alſo labour in the word and doctrine, as paſtors and teachers: Another ſort, who do only rule, and doing it well, are counted worthy of double honour; and theſe are the ruling-elders.

Now the office of the ruling elder being of divine inſtitution, theſe that are once lawfully called thereunto, and have gifts from God meet to exerciſe the ſame (unleſs they be removed therefrom, becauſe of miſcarriage) are ſtill elders; though (happily) in congregations, where many qualified men may be found, ſome may be permitted, for a time, to ſurceaſe from the exerciſe of their charge, and others put in their room, as was among the Levites under the law, in ſerving the temple by courſes.

III. As to the third, I ſhall ſhow what moveth us to admit ruling elders at this time: As,

Firſt, The neceſſity of ſuch an officer in the houſe of God: He is inſtitute in the word, and we ought to conſtitute him; for without him government and diſcipline cannot be rightly exerciſed. It was ſtill in a declining time of the church, that this office was little regarded: And becauſe of the ſingular neceſſity and uſefulneſs thereof, it has been a great eye-ſore to Satan and his inſtruments: And in former times and caſes of the church, like unto this, the admitting of qualified men unto this truſt and charge, hath been followed with no ſmall bleſſing, and ſucceſs and progreſs in reformation; which we pray God, may be the conſequent of this our action.

Secondly, The perpetuation, and continuation of ſuch an officer in the houſe of God: For, the old, or former elders, are many of them dead, and many of them turned ſo groſly ſcandalous, and fallen into ſuch ugly defection, that they have rendered themſelves incapable of being continued, or acknowledged as ſuch officers.

IV. As to the fourth, I labour to take off what may be objected againſt our preſent proceeding; and this I do by anſwer-

anſwering to ſome queſtions, that may be moſt orderly proponed.

The firſt queſtion is, It is uſual, that ruling-elders be admitted to reſpective pariſhes; but, this admiſſion is not ſo; therefore, how can it be ſuſtained as lawful?

I anſwer, 1*ſt*, Ruling-elders are indeed admitted to reſpective pariſhes, in the caſe and time of a conſtituted church; but now in the time of this her broken and declining ſtate, there is a moral impoſſibility of doing it ſo; For, the moſt part of the people in the ſeveral pariſhes of the land are either turned avowed and ſtated enemies unto God, or become ſuch that they will do nothing for God, and have no meddling in ſuch matters: And the want of that accidental circumſtance, can no ways warrant us to forbear ſuch neceſſary duty.

2*dly*, Theſe ruling-elders who now are to be admitted, are to exerciſe their office over ſuch as elect them; yea, and all ſuch as will ſubmit unto them, which none concurring with the teſtimony of the day, will refuſe. Howbeit, they are particularly aud ſpecially tied, to take inſpection of that bounds, where they are choſen; and therefore, they are to endeavour to reſide there, ſo far as the troubles of the time may allow.

3*dly*, They are, as to their not being fixed in reſpective pariſhes, in the like circumſtances with the miniſters, who, in this broken ſtate of the church, do officiate to all who employ them; and if this manner be right to them, ſo it is alſo to the ruling-elders in the preſent condition of affairs

The ſecond queſtion is, How can elders be admitted by any miniſters, but theſe who are ſettled and fixed in their reſpective pariſhes?

I anſwer, We find in ſcripture, that it hath been done in the growing ſtate of the church, Acts xiv. 23. And therefore it is moſt lawful for miniſters, in her diſturbed and broken ſtate, when people invite them, receive ordinances at their hands, and ſet the men, whom they chooſe, before them; to admit ſuch to this office, providing that, after trial, they be found qualified; which accordingly hath been practiſed in the churches of Chriſt in former ages: Yea, even in the time of a conſtitute church, though it be moſt uſual and ordinary, that elders are admitted by the miniſters of their reſpective pariſhes; yet, in caſe that a pariſh wanted a miniſter, that work was to be performed by one or more miniſters of the preſbytery.

The third queſtion, is, This way of admiſſion ſeems to be ſchiſmatical; yea, the ſetting up a church within a church; therefore, how can it be warrantable?

I anſwer, There is nothing like ſchiſm in it: For, though we have not the concurrence of theſe miniſters and elders,

who are departed out of the way, with whom we cannot join in other parts of their office; yet this work is agreed upon by the faithful miniſters and elders, who own the teſtimony of the day. There is here no new thing; there is here no innovations; there is here no ſetting up a church within a church, but an adding to the number of her officers, that the old church, to ſay ſo, may not die among our hands.

The fourth queſtion, If our church ſhall come to a conſtituted ſettled ſtate, then what ſhall become of theſe elders? How, or where ſhall they exerciſe their function?

I anſwer, That even as the miniſters, who now travel about, in diſcharging their office, moſtly for the advantage of the church, in the caſe wherein ſhe now is, would then be miniſters of that particular flock or pariſh, whereunto they got application; ſo, the ruling elder, with application to the reſpective pariſh, where then they might reſide, would become their elders; and no civil power on earth uſurping a ſupremacy, or eccleſiaſtical power, miſweilding the keys, can exauctorate theſe, whom now we admit; unleſs their own ſcandals give an eccleſiaſtick power (conſcientiouſly uſing the keys) ſufficient ground for it, which we pray the Lord may prevent.

V. As to the fifth, I ſpeak of the vocation, or calling of ruling-elders: As no man is to intrude himſelf into any ſacred function in the houſe of God, Heb. v. 4. ſo, before any take upon him to exerciſe the office of a ruling-elder, he ought to be lawfully called thereunto: This call is inward, or outward: The inward call is the teſtimony of a good conſcience, concerning ſome meaſure of ability and gifts for the charge; and ſincere and honeſt inclinations and purpoſes, to imploy theſe gifts for the honour of God, the advancement of the kingdom of Chriſt Jeſus, and the good of ſouls The outward calling is, to be after the ſame manner with that of other church officers: And it ſtands (1.) In their election. (2.) The trial of their carriage and gifts. (3.) Their admiſſion to the charge.

1. The election is to be made, by theſe amongſt whom they are to bear charge, Acts iv. 3. 5. and xiv. 23. That it may be gone about in the more orderly way, it is fit that a nomination be made of the beſt qualified perſonss, for the employment, by the miniſter and elders; in caſe of the want of elders, by the moſt judicious and godly members; particularly maſters of families: And that intimation of the names of the perſons nominated, be publickly made to the people, among whom they are to bear rule; and they deſired, in caſe of their not being ſatisfied, as having exceptions, or knowing others better qualified, to repreſent the ſame.

2. The

2. The trial is to be made by the miniſter and elderſhip: And, they are to be tried, both in regard of their converſation, that it be blameleſs and holy; and alſo, in regard of their knowledge, and experience in the things of God, and affairs of his houſe, and of their ability and prudence for government. The apoſtle, 1 Timothy iii. 10. ſpeaking of deacons, which is the loweſt rank of the officers of the church, requires, that they firſt be proved: And more eſpecially ought the elders; yea, the ſame reaſons and grounds, that plead for the trial of a miniſter, plead alſo for the trial of ruling elders, in a way ſuitable to the qualifications required in them.

3. The admiſſion is to be made by the miniſter, in preſence of the whole congregation, with the preaching of the word concerning their duty; and with prayer and humiliation, concerning the ſpirit of their calling to be poured out upon them; and that the pleaſure of the Lord may proſper in their hands: He which time, they are ſolemnly to engage themſelves unto all the duties of that holy office; and the people alſo are to engage themſelves, to ſubmit unto them in the Lord.

Now this order hath been followed for the perſons, who now are to be admitted into this great truſt: They have been elected by the reſpective ſocieties, among whom they are particularly to bear rule; and tried by the miniſter and elders, and found, (in a tolerable meaſure) qualified for that honourable employment. And that we may proceed to admiſſion, we deſire you who have been choſen and proven, for bearing the office of ruling-elders, to ſtand up ——I aſk, if ye be all willing to take on the charge of ruling-elders in the church of Chriſt.———

VI. So I come, in the ſixth place, to ſhow you the duties of ruling-elders, to take you engaged thereunto.

The duties are, either perſonal, and relate to your converſation; or, official, and relate to the office. Your perſonal qualifications, or the duties of your converſation, are the ſame with theſe that the apoſtle requires in the converſation of a miniſter, 1 Tim. iii. 2,——7. iv. 12. and vi 11. Alſo Tit. i. 6, 7, 8. For under the name of Επισκοποι. or overſeers, he comprehends all theſe officers, who have overſight and charge of ſouls. But that ye may more diſtinctly know the duties of your converſation, from theſe ſcriptures, I ſhall ſubdivide them into negative and poſitive duties: The negative duties ſhow you what you muſt not be; and the poſitive, what you muſt be, in regard of your converſation.

NEGATIVE DUTIES, are,

(1.) Ye muſt not begiven to wine; ye muſt not be lovers

nor

nor followers of ſtrong drink, nor tipple away time in alehouſes. (2.) Ye muſt not be covetous nor greedy of filthy lucre. (3) Ye muſt not be ſoon angry, neither upon real, nor conceived cauſe of provocation. (4.) Ye muſt not be ſtrikers nor brawlers, nor given to quarrellings and contentions. (5) Ye muſt not be ſelf-willed, adhering pertinaciouſly, and without reaſon, to your own judgments, and refuſing to hearken to the judgment of your brethren, though ſound and wholeſome. (6) Ye muſt not be novices, or ſuch as are newly come to the faith, leſt ye be puffed up with pride, and fall into the condemnation of the devil: The ſpirits of novices are not yet well ballaſted, nor brought low by frequent exerciſes of the croſs; and ſo come to be more eaſily puffed up: Therefore, there is need that ye be exerciſed ſoldiers of Jeſus Chriſt, and who by experience are taught to know the wiles of the devil, and are able to endure hardneſs.

POSITIVE DUTIES.

(1.) Ye muſt be blameleſs, that is, without offence towards God and man. (2.) Ye muſt be vigilant, watchful over your own ſouls, that no temptation prevail upon you; ready to lay hold upon every opportunity of well doing. (3.) Ye muſt be ſober temperate, of a ſound and humble mind moderating your own appetites and affections, and ſatisfying yourſelves with a moderate uſe of the creatures and things of this world. (4) Ye muſt be chaſte, ſhunning all luſts, and every immodeſt and unbecoming carriage. (5.) Ye muſt be holy; careful to exerciſe the life of religion, and power of godlineſs in all your converſation. (6.) Ye muſt be juſt and upright in your dealings among men, deceiving no man, and withholding from no man what is his due. (7.) Ye muſt be moderate and not rigorous, nor exacting the higheſt of the law in your dealings; but in your own particulars of a condeſcending nature, and remmitting ſomething of ſtrict juſtice. (8.) Ye muſt be given to hoſpitality; ready to receive ſtrangers, eſpecially the poor and theſe who are of the houſhold of faith. (9.) Ye muſt be lovers of good men, whoſe ſouls cleave to theſe who fear God, having ſuch an eſtimation above all others, cheriſhing them, and converſing ordinarily with them, and familiarly with them. (10.) Ye muſt be apt to teach, that is, men of knowledge and able to inſtruct others, of willing and ready minds to teach others; which is not ſo meant, as if it were requiſite for you to be endued with the gift of inſtruction and exhortation, competent to the teacher and paſtor; or that ye may and ought to employ yourſelves there in: But of that fitneſs and ability to teach, that is competent to your calling, which ye muſt be ready and willing to exerciſe,

ciſe, ſo far as is competent to you or belongs to you. (11.) Ye muſt be patient, waiting upon your duty, without wearying, notwithſtanding of difficulties, and bearing the delays, untractableneſs and injuries of others. (12.) Ye muſt be of a good behaviour, men of a grave and ſtayed, yet of an affable and courteous carriage; neither light nor vain, to the loſing of your authority, and rendring yourſelves contemptible; nor ſurly and ſelf-pleaſing to the diſcouraging and ſcarring away of the flock, by your needleſs diſtance and auſterity. (13.) Ye muſt be ſtable in the truths of God; holding faſt the faithful word, which ye have been taught without wavering and turning aſide to error. (14.) Ye muſt be of good report of theſe, who are without; leſt ye fall into reproach, and the ſnare of the devil: Not that ye muſt be without reproach of a wicked and malignant generation; for they reproached Chriſt, the Prophets and Apoſtles But that ye muſt be of ſuch a blameleſs converſation, ſober and Chriſtian walk, as may extort a teſtimony even from theſe, who know not God, and by well-doing put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, that if any ſpeak evil of you, as evil doers, they may be aſhamed who ſpeak falſly againſt your good converſation in Chriſt. (15.) Ye muſt perform your relative duties. You who have families muſt rule well your own houſes. This ruling well imports, not only an ability for doing of it; but alſo, making conſcience of and actually performing theſe duties that are required, for the right ordering of a Chriſtian family.

I proceed, in the next place, to ſhow your official duties, or the duties of your office and calling: And I ſubdivide them into more private and more public duties. The more private ſhew you, what you are to perform yourſelves alone; and the more public, what ye are to perform jointly with the reſt of the overſeers of the houſe of God.

The more private duties of your calling are theſe, that Chriſtians are bound to perform each one to other, by the law of charity and love, and much more ye by virtue of your office. As,

(1.) Ye muſt inſtruct, John iv. 29. Acts xviii. 26. (2.) Ye muſt exhort, Heb. x 24, 25. (3.) Ye muſt admoniſh and rebuke, Lev. xix. 17. (4.) Ye muſt comfort the afflicted, and ſupport the weak, 1 Theſſ. v. 11. (5.) Ye muſt reſtore theſe that are fallen, Gal. vi. 1. And ſo alſo endeavour to prevent the falling, or ſtraying of any, and their countenancing or ſtrengthning any courſe of iniquity or defection. (6.) Ye muſt reconcile theſe, that are at variance, Matth. v. 9. (7.) Ye muſt pray one for another, Jude 20. (8.) Ye muſt viſit the ſick and theſe who are in diſtreſs, Matth. xxv. 36. The ſcripture doth expreſly mention ſome of theſe duties as incumbent

bent upon ruling-elders, as admonition, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. viſiting and praying over the ſick, Jam. v. 14. feeding the flock by inſtruction, exhortation, rebuke and comfort, in ſuch a way as is competent to their ſtation, Acts xx. 28. and the reſt we may warrantably gather by analogy and proportion: For if private Chriſtians be obliged thereunto, much more are Chriſtan elders in a ſpecial way, who have the charge of ſouls. Theſe things are well expreſſed in the ſixth chapter the ſecond book of diſcipline, "As paſtors and doctors (ſay "they) ſhould be diligent in teaching and ſowing the ſeed of "the word; ſo, the elders ſhould be careful in ſeeking the "fruit of the ſame of the people. It appertains to them to a-"ſiſt the paſtor in examination of them that come to the Lord's "table; and in viſiting the ſick: They ſhould cauſe the acts "of the aſſemblies, as well particular as general, to be put in "execution carefully. They ſhould be diligent in admoniſh-"ing all men of their duty, according to the rule of the e-"vangeliſt: Things that they cannot correct by private ad-"monition, they ſhould bring to the elderſhip."

The more public duties of your calling are theſe which lie upon you, in the aſſemblies or courts of the church, which are made to teaching elders, preaching-elders, and ruling-elders. Theſe aſſemblies are congregational, claſſical, provincial, general, or national and œcumenical. Theſe things which are handled in the aſſemblies of the church, are, either matters of faith, matters of order, matters of diſcipline, or that which concerneth the ſending of the church officers. According to which, they have a fourfold power.

Firſt, Dogmatick, whereby they judge of truth and error, in points of doctrine, according to the word of God only. *Secondly*, Diatactick, whereby they diſcern and judge of the circumſtances of theſe things, that belong to the worſhip of God; as times, places, perſons, and all ſuch particulars in eccleſiaſtick affairs (as are not determined in the word) according to the general rules thereof, concerning order and decency, avoiding of ſcandal, doing all to the glory of God and edifying of the church. *3dly*, Critick, or corrective, whereby the ſcandalous are cenſured, and the penitent received again into the ordinances and fellowſhip of the church. *4thly*, Exouſiaſtick, whereby church officers are ſent and authorized, power given unto them to ſerve the houſe of God.

All theſe aſſemblies are not to exerciſe all theſe powers, but to keep themſelves within their due bounds; the inferior leaving theſe things that are of more common concernment to the ſupperiors. But in all theſe powers ruling-elders have a ſhare, and do put forth the ſame in exerciſe according to the meaſure that belongs to the aſſembly, whereof they are members, Acts xv. 6. 22, 25. Howbeit the execution of ſome decrees

crees of church aſſemblies, ſuch as the impoſition of hands, the pronouncing the ſentence of excomunication, receiving of penitents, the intimation of the depoſition of miniſters, and ſuch like, doth belong to the miniſters alone.

But becauſe the government, and more frequent duties of ruling-elders, lieth (for the moſt part) in the exerciſe of their ſhare of the power of cenſuring ſcandal and ſcandalous perſons, and trying and admitting of penitents. Therefore, I ſhew you ſomewhat of the right way of following your duty in theſe things. As,

1*ſt*, Ye muſt exerciſe your power over all perſons within your charge indifferently and impartially; over the rich as well as the poor, the high as well as the low, your kinsfolk as well as others, Jam. ii. 1. *Divers weights and divers meaſures are an abomination to the Lord*; yea you muſt exerciſe it over theſe of your own number; and alſo, over teaching and preaching elders, Acts xx. 28.

2*d*, Ye muſt exerciſe your power towards all ſorts of ſcandals and offences, 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. The acts of our church do appoint that, whatſoever it be, that might ſpot a Chriſtian congregation, ought not to eſcape either admonition or cenſure. Therefore ye muſt take notice of all ſcandalous omiſſions and commiſſions.

3*d*, Ye muſt not bring in civil queſtions and debates before the aſſemblies of the church, John xviii. 36.

4*th*, Ye muſt obſerve this order in taking notice of offences: If the offence be private, and known but to a few, then follow the order preſcribed unto you by Chriſt, Matth. xviii. 15, 17, 16. If the offence be public, and open, then is the offender, without previous admonitions, to be delated to the ſeſſion, 1 Tim. v. 20.

5*th*, In theſe delations, you muſt not, upon every rumour, or jealouſy, or ſuſpicion, bring men to be queſtioned publicly, as ſcandalous walkers; but ye are firſt to make diligent and prudent enquiry about the truth of the matter, and to ſee if it can be proven by witneſſes; or, if the ſcandal thereof be common and flagrant, or attended with pregnant likelihoods, and preſumptions of truth, before ye bring it to public.

6*th*, In the matter of delations and cenſure, ye muſt, in the fear of God, and ſincerity of your heart, take heed, that fear, or favour, or ſolicitations, or threatnings, or gifts, or bribes, make you not wink at the faults of any; and that paſſion, or malice, or private quarrels and particulars, make you not rip up, delate, or cenſure the miſcarriage of any: And alſo, that ye carry yourſelves with tenderneſs, compaſſion and moderation towards the offender, Gal. vi. 1. that

ye may commend yourſelves to every man's conſcience, 2 Cor. iv. 2.

7th, Ye muſt not uſe nor inflict any civil puniſhment upon perſons convicted of ſcandal: The kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt and the cenſures thereof are ſpiritual, and not of this world, John xviii. 36.

8th, Ye muſt not uſe the cenſures of the church as a bodily puniſhment, or penance to ſatisfy for ſin; but as a ſpiritual medicine, for humbling and gaining of the ſoul: All church-cenſures, even excomunication itſelf, are ordained of God for this end, 1 Corinth. v. 5. The word ſatisfaction, may admit of a tolerable conſtruction in church cenſures, in order to the removing of the ſcandal; but this being ſo much abuſed in the popiſh church, and the hearts of men being ſo prone to turn goſpel-repentance into a mere legal penance, and to conceive that by a mere outward ſubmiſſion and obedience to the cenſures of the church, the guilt of their ſin is done away before God: Therefore ye would carefully ſhun every thing that may give occaſion to the foſtering of this pernicious opinion, and take due pains to inſtruct the offenders, in the true nature and ends of the cenſures of the church.

9th, Ye muſt take pains upon perſons convicted of ſcandals, to bring them to repentance, and to have them fitted to evidence and declare the ſame in public, before the congregation, that ſo the ſcandal may be removed.

10th, Ye muſt not deſire, or appoint, any to profeſs repentence before the congregation, until the ſigns thereof appear in them: For, it is but a mocking, to put ſuch to a public repentance, who neither underſtand what ſin is, what repentance is, what grace is, nor by whom God's favours and mercies are purchaſed: For this, ſee what is ſet down in the form and order of public repentance, appointed by the aſſembly 1567.

Laſtly, When the ſigns and evidences of unfeigned repentance do appear, in theſe who have offended; ye muſt ſhow yourſelves ready and willing to receive them, with all tenderneſs and compaſſion, and to forgive and comfort them, and confirm your love towards them, 2 Cor. ii 7, 8.

Now theſe are the duties briefly and ſummarily holden forth unto you.——But, before we take you engaged, we will pray.——

Do ye give your adhernce to the ſcriptures of the Old and New-Teſtaments, our confeſſion of faith, as it is received and approven by the general aſſembly of this church, our catechiſms larger and ſhorter, our covenants national and ſolemn league, aud to the acts of our lawful general aſſemblies, for promoval and defence of reformation? And alſo unto the teſtimony

teſtimony of our day, againſt popery, prelacy, eraſtianiſm, indulgence, tyranny, ſectarianiſm, ſchiſm, defection, and all hereſie and error; as it is ſtated and owned by the preſent witneſſing and ſuffering remnant, according to the word of God, and the foreſaids? And do ye firmly and unfeignedly purpoſe and reſolve to continue all the days of your lives in adherence to theſe? So that no terror or perſuaſion of men ſhall turn you aſide, either to compliance with iniquity, or deſerting of duty.

Now, ye do undertake the office of ruling elders in the church of Chriſt, and ſolemnly engage before the Lord, that ye ſhall be faithful, diligent and watchful over the flock committed to your charge, and in all the duties of that holy and honourable employment?

And ye who are the people, ye are taken engaged to obey theſe ruling-elders, and to ſubmit yourſelves to them in the Lord; for they watch for your ſouls, as they that muſt give account: And to honour them, and highly eſteem them in love for their works ſake, according as is preſcribed unto you, Heb. viii. 17. 1 Theſſ. v. 12, 13. If ye ſhall miſregard their office, diſdain their perſons, ſlight their wholſome inſtructions and exhortations, and neglect their ſound and ſeaſonable admonitions and rebukes, ye ſhall be found to deſpiſe Chriſt, contemn his ordinances, reject the means of your edification, and to ſave your own ſouls, in the ſight of the holy one, when *he ſhall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

Thus Mr. James Renwick admitted, or ordained elders (ſtill concluding the work with prayer) not only at the two times end places foreſaid, but at other times in ſeveral other places, in that diſturbed and afflicted ſtate of the church; which the unbyaſſed reader may perceive, was no leſs orderly, ſolemn, and conform to ſcripture-rule, than if it had been in a ſettled and conſtituted church. Yea, ſome may obſerve how far it excels the ſuperficial manner of admitting elders by many in a ſettled and (as is pretended, well) conſtituted church. And if elders, admitted in our days, have not been ſo well preadmoniſhed of their duties, or be not conſcientiouſly diligent and faithful in the diſcharge of their ſeveral duties, in that ſacred function, they need not be aſhamed to learn by the above mentioned method and documents of that young diſciple of Chriſt, who, it is evident, was a beloved one, and had the mind of the Lord; and like young Elihu, having the ſpirit and love of Chriſt conſtraining him, did not accept any man's perſon, nor give flattering titles to man; but freely and faithfully delivered the whole counſel of God.

A REPLY to Mr. Robert Langlan's LETTER to Gavin Wotherspoon, by Mr. James Renwick Miniſter of the Goſpel.

December 13, 1685.

Sir,

I HAVE ſeen your letter which you wrote to Gavin Wotherſpoon, and it doth not a little trouble me, that ye have, and expreſt ſo great miſtakes of us; many are the wormwoods and bitter ingredients in our cup, and I think our ſad and wide breaches (together with the various ſpiritual plagues that have ſeized upon our ſpirits) are amongſt the bittereſt. But until the Lord heal our backſlidings, (by taking away the guilt thereof, and breaking the power thereof, and removing the ſpiritual judgments, which are the ſaddeſt conſequences thereof, and pour down the ſpirit from on high) it will never be otherwiſe with us: Our ruptures will never be truly and ſafely removed, until our ſins be confeſſed, mourned over and forſaken, and the unclean ſpirits of ſelf, prejudice and miſtakes be made to paſs out of the land. For mine own part, union in the Lord, would be a moſt rejoicing, pleaſant, and deſirable thing: I ſay, that union, that is bottomed upon the truth, and cemented with love; for any kind of union would be but a conſpiracy, and not union. O for that ſoul-raviſhing day, when we ſhall have union rightly qualified! I think that would be the church of Scotland's reſtauration.

But to come to your foreſaid letter: There are ſome things there, Sir, which (I ſay) are not a little aſtoniſhing to me: I ſhall not now enter into the liſt of the debate; but I deſire, in the fear of the Lord, that, ye would look otherwiſe upon our matters: Ye ſay, "That we have overturned preſbyteri-"an government even to the foundation, and put in its "room a popular confuſion:" And to prove this, ye inſtance a paper of ours in reply to James Ruſſel, his libel againſt us; whence ye draw, that we commit to perſons, that are not church officers, the trial both of the degree of ſcandals, and the degree of cenſures to be inflicted for the ſame. But in this ye wrong our paper, very ſadly; for, it does not at all ſpeak of cenſures, or the meaſure thereof committed to theſe perſons, but only the trying and ſearching out the meaſure of the ſcandal; and by trying and ſearching, there, we do not underſtand, a judicial trying and ſearching, but only private and popular, by way of information; not that we might judge

judge or cenſure the perſon, if ſcandalous: But, that we might have a judgment of our own duty, how to carry towards him; and if the meaſure of the ſcandal would bear the weight of our withdrawing from him: *Non per modum ſpecialis delegationes, ſed per modum communis charitatis;* not by way of ſpecial delegation, but by way of common charity, which is no act of the keys: And this is very clear; ſeeing our paper makes no mention of cenſure, though ye alledge the ſame upon it. Alſo charity, which thinketh no evil, would put this conſtruction upon our words, ſeeing they can ſo well bear it. Again, the word (try) is taken in this ſenſe, 1 John iv. 1. *Try the ſpirits*, which epiſtle is not written to church guides, only: ſicklike, Rutherford, in his peaceable plea for preſbytery, chap. i. page 83. diſclaims a repreſentative church, in a common ſenſe; which is a number ſent by a community, to give laws, abſolutely trying: As if believers ſhould ſay, we reſign our faith and conſcience to you, to hold good whatſoever you determine, without repeal, or trial: Now, doth not this make it clear, that our words will bear this ſenſe? All that we underſtand and expreſs by them, is alſo competent to profeſſors of the faith; as Acts xvii. 11. *Theſe of Berea receeived the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the ſcriptures daily, whether theſe things were ſo.* Now, theſe were the believers in Berea, and not the church guides, as is clear in the 12th verſe, where it is ſpoken of women, who are not admitted to bear any office in the church: Moreover, Acts xi. *Theſe of the circumciſion contended with Peter*, for an alledged ſcandal, for *eating with the uncircumciſed:* and he reherſes the matter from the beginning, and expounds it in order to them. From this, I do not draw (with the independants) that the power of cenſuring church-guides is in the hands of the people; as in their argument from the forecited place: But, I hold what holy and learned Rutherford ſaith, in anſwer thereunto, in his peaceable plea, chap. iv. page 51, 52. (to wit) That Peter, or any church-guide, is to purge himſelf before any one brother of a ſcandal: Yea, the neceſſity of his ſalvation, and ſo the law of nature forbids to offend the weak, and willeth him to purge himſelf, if he were a Pope, ſaith Oecom. If Peter had done wrong, he was obliged to confeſs his ſcandal before one offended brother, and alſo, before all the church: But that proveth not jurisdiction in the believer.

Laſtly, If this belong not unto people, they have nothing but a blind implicite faith; and what better are they than papiſts, who muſt believe as the church believes? Yea, hath not every private Chriſtian a judgment of diſcretion, even in reference to the actions of others? ſeeing they are to do nothing doubtingly, but to be fully perſuaded in their own minds

minds, Rom. xiv. 5. 23. But ſome (I know) ſay, that withdrawing from a ſcandalous perſon, is a cenſuring of a ſcandalous perſon; and to withdraw from a ſcandalous miniſter, is to depoſe him, and make him no miniſter. But this I deny; for ſimple withdrawing is not the inflicting of a cenſure, but only the believers teſtifying their ſenſe, that the cenſure ſhould be inflicted (to wit) by ſuch as are competent: And this is warranted by ſcripture, Rom. xiv. 17. Eph v 11. 2 Theſſ. iii. 14. and many ſuch like places. Alſo, Rutherford ſaith, in his peaceable plea, chap. iv. page 25. That the law of nature will warrant a popular and private ſubſtraction and ſeparation from the miniſtry of a known wolf and ſeducer; and alloweth what Parker ſaith, from Saravia, *Licet tutela inculpata uti, ſi malus rector ab eccleſia deponi nequit.* It is lawful to uſe that blameleſs and juſt defence, if the bad church-guide cannot be depoſed. Any private perſon may take that care for the ſafety of their ſoul, that they may do for the ſafety of their bodies: For, a ſon may defend himſelf, by flying from his diſtracted father, coming to kill him; and none will call this an act judicial of authority, but only an act natural. Now, I ſay private ſeparation from ſcandalous perſons, is not depriving of them, if they be paſtors; nor an excommunicating of them, if they be profeſſors: For, the letter is an act of authority, belonging to theſe to whom Chriſt hath given the keys; but the former is an act natural, belonging to every believer. Likewiſe, if withdrawing from a ſcandalous perſon be a cenſuring of ſcandalous perſons, then the profeſſors who withdraw from the curates, do cenſure the curates; which I hope no ſound preſbyterian will ſay. Howbeit, I diſtinguiſh betwixt a perſon ſcandalous really, and a perſon ſcandalous judicially; and between a church in a ſettled ſtate, and a church in a broken ſtate. So, I ſay, when a church is in a ſettled ſtate, a perſon really ſcandalous cannot be withdrawn from, until (at leaſt) he be judicially, by two or three witneſſes, convicted, before the church, Rutherford's peaceable plea, chap. ix. page 171. ſeeing that the brethern offended have church-judicatories to appeal unto, for taking order with offenders: But when the church is in a broken ſtate, and *every man* (as the children of Iſrael, when they wanted governors) (*doing that which is right in his own eyes*, there may and ſhould be withdrawing from a perſon ſcandalous really, though he be not ſcandalous judicially; becauſe then eccleſiaſtick judicatories, for cenſuring of him, cannot be had: Otherwiſe, all muſt go into a mixed confuſion together; the faithful muſt become partakers of other mens ſins, private and popular means of reclaiming offending brethren ſhall be ſtopt, and the teſtimonies of the faithful ſhall fall to the ground. But (mark it) I am not, even

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in this caſe, for a rude, off hand withdrawing, until private admonition (according to Chriſt's method) once and again, prove ineffectual; and the offender declare his obſtinacy. Now, I beg that ye would conſider how heavy a charge ye have laid upon us, by aſſerting, "That we have overturned "preſbyterian government even to the foundation, and put "in its room popular confuſion;" ſeeing your grounds are bottomleſs. And as to this I ſhall no more: But ye have a way, Sir, of drawing ſtretched conſequences from words and ſentences, (which I cannot join with) as ye have done from the foreſaid words, in our foreſaid reply; as, to all unprejudiced perſons, may be manifeſt. As alſo, from that word [treacherous] in our proteſtation, againſt the Scotiſh congregation at Rotterdam, aſſerting and writing, that the foreſaid word [treacherous] imports a deſign to betray: But for my own part, I could never ſee that it imported more than a practical deſerting of duty, or betraying of truſt, abſtracting from the perſon's deſign; and I never knew another commentary upon it: And I deſire to know, what way treacherous (expreſſed Zeph. iii. 4.) will bear your ſenſe. Alſo, great Mr. Durham, in his treatiſe upon ſcandal, doth ſay, "That the term, malicious, is not to be referred to the "deſign of the perſon; though malicious be ſtill taken in as "bad a ſenſe as treacherous." Ah! the Lord behold our caſe. James Ruſſel ſpreads of us, that we went off at the left-hand, by admitting ſcandalous perſons amongſt us: And ye write of us, that we went off the right hand, by devolving the church power upon the ſhoulders of the people; ſo we are beat upon both hands. The Lord help us.

Secondly, Ye ſay, "We have moſt unhappily thruſt in "ourſelves into the magiſtrates room, and taken to us the "civil government." Wherefrom do ye draw this? From our declining the magiſtrates, becauſe tyrants? Then every man declining a prelate, becauſe a church officer not of Chriſt's appointment, thruſts himſelf into the prelate's room, and takes unto himſelf the eccleſiaſtick government; and what great abſurdity will be here? But miſtake me not; for I will not miſinterpret your words: Ye ſay, "That, if every "man of us, for himſelf, had ſaid, he could not own the "magiſtrates and the preſent government, becauſe tyrants "and tyrannical; there had been little to be ſaid; eſpecially "if we had done as we ſaid, ſtriving like men to caſt off the "yoke." But, granting it had been ſo, there would have been ſomething to be ſaid; for little to be ſaid, imports ſomething to be ſaid; and I know many ſaid very much, even againſt the matter of the dead: Alſo, we could have ſaid more than that we, every man for himſelf, could not own the government, becauſe tyrannical; and the magiſtrate, becauſe

tyrants:

tyrants: For we could have ſaid, we, for ourſelves and all our adherents, and all theſe by whom we were ſent and commiſſionated for that deed, could not own the foreſaids; and that the law of God, the law of nature, and the fundamental laws of our land, and our covenants, did oblige all the ſubjects of our kingdom (eſpecially theſe who yet profeſs adherence to our covenants) to do, as we have done: And this is all that I underſtand, by any words in our declaration (about which ye make ſo much matter of debate.) Alſo, how can it be inſtructed, that we have acted as a convention of eſtates? The mere diſowning of the preſent government and governors, doth it not; for that is an act radical and natural. And as for the expreſſion itſelf, in our Lanerk declaration, (uſed in the hiſtorical relation of the Sanquhair declaration preceeding) to wit, convention of eſtates; what needeth ſo much fighting about it, ſeeing ye know our mind? Famous Mr. Rutherford ſaith, in his peaceable plea, chap ix. page 107. "That he liſts not to ſtrive about names." We crave only that right, that God and nature have given us; and come in behind us, or go out before us who will, let us have our own place. Howbeit, as to me, theſe words, that ye fight ſo much againſt, in our declaration, may bear a ſafe ſenſe, though I diſown the ſenſe ye put upon them: For, as to convention of eſtates, I underſtand it not in a formal and proper ſenſe, extending itſelf judicially over the whole land (although all were obliged to have concurred with us, by reaſon of the duty of the action:) But in an improper and figurative ſenſe; yea, may it not be ſaid by Synecdoche? the better part getting the denomination of the whole; they acting jointly, by common conſent, and explicite commiſſion, for that effect, from ſeveral honeſt ſufferers, in ſeveral corners of the land, in the name of all their adherents; and founding upon the law of nature, the fundamental laws of the kingdom, and our laudable conſtitutions. And as to the other expreſſions, in our Lanerk declaration, to wit, "In our name and authority;" I underſtand it not as importing the authority of the judge, but the authority of the law, which certainly they had; they keeping by the fundamental laws of the land.

And as to that, in our firſt declaration at Sanquhar, *viz.* "Repreſentatives of church and covenanted nation:" What abſurdity is there in ſaying, that theſe elders, who keep cloſeſt by the lawful conſtitutions of a church, are the repreſentatives thereof? And people of a covenanted nation, who keep cloſeſt by their covenants, (even though they were never ſo few) are the repreſentatives thereof, as it is covenanted; though not in an authoritative and nomothetical, yet in a material and principal ſenſe; as it hath a relation to the

word

word from whence it is derived, that is repreſentatives, not as it is ſtrictly taken, for theſe who are clothed with formal authority; but as it is largely taken, for theſe who do repreſent, or are in the place of others, doing that which all, whom they repreſent, are obliged unto, from the nature of the thing. But I do not hold, that theſe declarations were emitted by a formal judicatory, as having the authority of any judge; for as yet, I ſee not how ſome perſons, as having eccleſiaſtick authority, and others, as having civil authority, could authoritatively concur in one action: I leave this to the tyrant's council, which is made up of lords ſpiritual and temporal, as they call them. So, I look upon the declarations to be emitted by the publiſhers, as free ſubjects, for themſelves, and theſe, from whom they are commiſſionated, for that effect; and all others their adherents. And, for mine own part, I wiſh that theſe words had been otherwiſe expreſſed, that ſo they might not have admitted of ſuch various ſenſes. Nevertheleſs, I ſtill think, where there is a cordial agreeing with the matter and intent of theſe papers, there would not be any ſuch enveighing againſt theſe expreſſions; eſpecially ſeeing the minds of the owners thereof are ſound (even anent the ſame) and their meaning good. And I wonder greatly how ye can exclaim ſo much againſt the foreſaid names, ſeeing we told you many times, in our conferences together, our judgment concerning them, that we owned them not in the ſenſe that ye put upon them; and that, rather than that debate ſhould be kept up, upon ſuch a head merely; though we could not reſile from them in any ſafe and ſound ſenſe, wherein we ourſelves could take them; yet, for union's ſake in the Lord, we would be content to lay them aſide, deſiring no more of any, who would join with us, (as to that head) than their cordial agreement with the matter and intent of our foreſaid declarations. Yet, notwithſtanding of all this, ye often recurred upon theſe words at our meeting, and now have written, that "we have moſt "unhappily thruſt ourſelves into the magiſtrates room;" and that "we continue moſt unhappily to manage civil affairs." Seeing that ye know our minds. Sir, why will ye make men ſuch offenders for words? ſuppoſe they could bear no ſafe ſenſe at all: Will ſuch a ſpirit be helpful, to the healing of our breaches? And how comes it, that in the relation, which ye give of our conferences, ye ſay, "That we have diſowned "ſuch things," and in this your letter ye ſay the contrary, aſſerting, that "we continue yet, moſt unhappily to manage "civil affairs." And whereas ye ſay, "There would have "been little to be ſaid, eſpecially, if we had done as we ſaid, "ſtriving like men to caſt off the yoke:" We have done as the Lord gave us ſpirit and ability; and he hath aſſiſted many

of us, (O praiſe be to him alone for it) to wreſtle to our utmoſt breath, and to leave our blood both on ſcaffolds and fields, in teſtimony againſt the wrongs done to our Lord Jeſus, by that tyrannical government. And I think people ſhould not ſpeak much of our doing little, until they do more themſelves. And for my own part, I wiſh, the Lord might poliſh and raiſe up a party, whoſe zealous, Chriſtian, and manly actions, might obſcure all ours: For, the glory is only due to the Lord, and not to any creature; and a ſelf denied Chriſtian will deſire, that all inſtruments hands may be hid, to the end that the Lord's hand may the more appear; ſo that, he may get all the praiſe of the work. Now, from this, I wiſh, ye may ſee how groundleſs your accuſation is.

Thirdly, You ſay, "That we have impoſed moſt unhappy "reſtrictions upon miniſters, in the exerciſe of their mini-"ſtry." I think, this poor miſtaken remnant, never in the leaſt intended any reſtrictions on miniſters; but only deſire that they may declare unto them the mind of God faithfully, both anent the ſins and duties of our day; they would have miniſters taking a liberty to preach up all duties, and down all ſins: This is no reſtriction, neither is it any impoſition; neither is it a preſcribing rules to miniſters; for the word of God hath preſcribed this rule, Iſa. lviii. 1. *Shew my people their tranſgreſſions, and the houſe of Jacob their ſins.* Jer. xv. 19. *If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou ſhalt be as my mouth:* But this is *a pleading with our mother*, Hoſ. ii. 2. And a *ſaying to Archippus, Take heed to the miniſtry, which thou haſt received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it.* And this the ſcriptures do allow, and this I hope ye will not deny: But to prove your aſſertion, I know ye will inſtance the firſt call given to the miniſters, which ye did ſee yourſelf long before I ſaw it; yet what needs this? ſeeing it was ſo frequently told in public, that, that call was not owned by us, as to all, (eſpecially the leſſer things in it) for, *pudor eſt nemini in meliora tranſire*, it is a ſhame for no man to mend the leaſt thing that is amiſs. Should not every Chriſtian (in whatſoever capacity) be ſtill ſtepping forward unto better? ſeeing there is neither perfection, nor infallibility here. I muſt ſay, that more tenderneſs ſhould be uſed towards a poor waſted bleeding people, chaſed by a cruel enemy, as patridges in the wilderneſs, their blood ſpilt in great meaſure; yea, and left in the dark by their leaders: Eſpecially ſeeing they are ſo willing to receive inſtruction, and to take with any thing that ever looked like the leaſt wrong among them. Which thing I have not yet ſeen in others; for they defend even their groſs ſcandals, and will not acknowledge any offence, in particular among themſelves, through the whole tract of our defections.

Further,

Further, Ye wrong us when ye ſay, "That becauſe they "preach upon ſuch and ſuch terms, we call them ſilent and "unfaithful, and requires diſowning of them." For, before even theſe terms were offered to them, by the ſuffering party, which, I wiſh, had been yet undone; we were in the ſame caſe and circumſtances as to them, that we are in to this day. And as for the queſtion put to theſe, who are admitted to ſit in our general meeting, *&c.* It is, anent "the joining with "the complying, ſilent and unfaithful miniſters of the time:" It is not my concern now, to deſcend in application to particular perſons; yet I aſk, 1*ſt*, Whether or not are there any ſuch in Scotland? 2*dly*, If there be any ſuch, whether or not ſhould they be joined with? 3*dly*, If they are to be joined with, what mean ſuch ſcripture precepts, Rom. xvi. 17. 2 Theſſ. iii. 14. And what mean our general aſſemblies to decree, "That "complying miniſters with the adverſaries, and ſilent and "unfaithful miniſters anent the ſins of the time, (if perſiſting "in them) ought to be depoſed." And, 4*thly*, Whether or not that which will bear the weight of depoſition, will bear the weight of withdrawing, when depoſition cannot be had, the miniſters perſiſting in their offenſive courſes? Now I hold, that people are not to judge miniſters, yet they are to have a judgment of their own duty, how to carry towards miniſters: I am againſt peoples deſiring any thing of miniſters, but what is divinely bound upon them by the word of God, and eccleſiaſtically by our national and ſolemn covenants, and acts of our general aſſemblies; ſo this is not the peoples impoſition, reſtriction, or binding, but what is bound by the authority of God and the church: And if theſe ties were regarded, as they ſhould be, honeſt people would be ſatisfied themſelves, and otherwiſe conſtructed by others; and there would not be ſuch differences, when we deſcend into particulars.

Now, I deſire from real charity towards you, that ye would weigh matters in the balance of the ſanctuary, which is even, and impartial; and forbear your far-fetched and ſickly conſequences, which ye draw from honeſt actions.

Alſo, I thought fit to inſinuate unto you here, that there are ſome things in the relation of what paſt at our conference, as it was reſumed by you before our general meeting, which I can ſufficiently prove, to be in a great part, miſrepreſented; as afterwards (if need be) may be made manifeſt. But as to what ye have ſaid, in your letter, of me in particular; I heartily forgive you, and ſhall be very brief in my reply.

Ye ſay, *Firſt*, That I have written in a letter to a friend in Ireland, "That there is not a miniſter in Scotland, England, "or Ireland, faithful ſave one;" I humbly and kindly de-

ſire, that ye would conſider upon what grounds ye have ſaid ſuch a thing; For the charge I deny; and the expreſſion (yea, ſuch a thought) would ſavour ſo much of the baſeſt of ſelf, (which, though it be as our ſkin, wherein our fleſh and bones are enchambered, and ſo nature is moſt tender of one penny breadth of it) that therefore I would abhor it. If I have written any thing of the unfaithfulneſs of miniſters indefinitely; yet it is a weer drawing of words, or a wrong drawn conſequence, to infer, that I have ſaid, "There is "none faithful in Britain or Ireland ſave one;" for it is not unuſal in the ſcriptures to ſpeak indefinitely of a plurality, that which is to be inſtanced of any of that ſort: See learned Mr. David Dickſon upon Matth. xxvii. 44. I ſhall ſay no more as to this, but, God pardon the unfaithfulneſs of miniſters; and let their deeds prove who have been faithful, and who not.

Secondly, Ye ſay, "That, by my own confeſſion, I am "not a miniſter of this church;" which I altogether deny: For, that which I ſaid, was, That I am a miniſter in that place wherever I have a call from the people, and do embrace it: And if your aſſertion will follow from this truly, I ſee not well; but I am ſhort-ſighted always. There are ſeveral other things in your letter, anent which I was thinking to have written unto you; but I being loth to trouble you, and the things themſelves not ſo material, I ſhall forbear, only deſiring, that what I have ſaid, ye would not take in ill part: For, ſo far as I can ſee into mine own heart, is is neither ſelf, nor prejudice, that hath moved me unto it; but merely, that truth may be cleared, and that the actings of the poor, wounded, ſuffering party, may not be ſo ſadly miſrepreſented, to the great detriment of the cauſe of Chriſt. Alſo, I beg, ye would not give ear to buſy bodies, and tale-bearers, their whiſpering in your ears: For ſuch have had no ſmall hand in widening of our breaches: I wiſh they may have pardon of God for what they have done. O that the Lord's elect were agreeing together in truth! O that all theſe, that ſhall agree in heaven, were agreeing upon earth! I think if my blood could be a means to procure it, I could willingly offer it up, upon that account: But I ſpeak as a fool. O that all the Lord's people were ſearching out their ſins, taking with their guilt; mourning for, and forſaking their iniquities! This would be yet ſome branch of hope. But that is coming, which will make many change their thoughts: For I write it, and abide by it, That the Lord is coming with a flood of his anger upon Scotland; and ere his controverſies be ended, he will work a ſtrange work in the land: For, as Micah vii. 11, 12, 13, Although that, *in the day*

day that her walls are to be built, the decree ſhall be far removed, and they ſhall come to her from ſea to ſea, and from mountain to mountain; Notwithſtanding the land ſhall be deſolate, becauſe of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings. O happy are they, who are going into their chambers, and cloſing door and windows about them, that wrath may have no entry in! O happy they, who are ſighing and crying, for all the abominations that are done in the earth! But, in the mean time, it doth not a little quiet and comfort me, that Chriſt hath told, that the government is upon his ſhoulders, and he knoweth how to erect a glorious fabric out of a maſs of confuſion; and I believe, he will make the ſucceding generation to reap a glorious fruit of the ſad ſufferings and contendings, that have been in our day. Not to trouble you further, I wiſh peace and truth may be your companions, I am,

SIR,

Your Soul's Wellwiſher,
And Friend in Jeſus Chriſt.

JAMES RENWICK.

ADVER-

ADVERTISEMENT,

TO THE

READER OF THE FOLLOWING TESTIMONY.

AS the worthy author hath, in ſeveral of his letters already printed, particularly the 25th, 43d, and 45th, letters, mentioned this teſtimony, and ſhown his deſign to reſcribe and enlarge it, and that he hoped never to reſile from it, as having the right ſtate of the cauſe therein; that he rejoiced in ſome of the effects, and tendency to the ſiding us, either for or againſt the Lord, there being not one article in it, but what he was more and more confirmed of;—that he was refreſhed yet, when he looked back to the frame he was then in, when he wrote it, and had peace in his ingenuity therein.——This has induced ſeverals, of different denominations, earneſtly to deſire that it might be publiſhed: And as it contains a comprehenſive ſummary at once of his judgment with reſpect to what was ſin and duty in that time (which is contained in and interſperſed through his ſermons and letters) it is expected, that, as it will be acceptable to many, ſo it will give offence to none; even although in his laſt letter he ſaith,—"Now as to my teſtimony, which I left in your hands, "when I entred into the work of the miniſtry, I do ſtill "adhere unto the matter of it; but I think the manner of "expreſſion is in ſome things too tart, and it containeth ſundry mens names, ſome whereof are now in eternity:— "Alſo it is not ſo pertinent to our preſent affairs, for the "ſtate of our controverſies is altered, therefore I judge it "may be deſtroyed, for I have ſufficient teſtimony left be-"hind me in my written ſermons and letters. But if this "trouble you, and if you deſire to keep it for your own uſe, "you would keep this letter with it, and not publiſh it fur-"ther abroad: Yet you may make uſe of any matter of it, "that may conduce to the clearing of any controverſy." It appears from ſome of his ſermons, that, by what he ſpeaks

of

of the ſtate of the controverſies being altered, he underſtands the diſcontinuance of the indulgence, and ſubſtitution of the boundleſs antichriſtian toleration in place thereof, and the blaſphamous abſolute power ſwallowing up the eccleſiaſtic ſupremacy, or transferring it to the pope: As alſo in ſaid letter he ſeems to propoſe two alternatives, viz. *either to ſuppreſs it, or that this letter may go along with it: the laſt is which is here performed: Therefore, as the letter is printed formerly in the volume of his letters, and alſo here all that relates to the teſtimony, it is ſuppoſed that by deleting a few (and indeed they are but a few) of the moſt tart phraſes that could be obſerved in it, and giving only the initials of the names of men, theſe being the chief things moſt offenſive at that time; it is hoped that none will think the worthy author injured, or that his deſire in the foreſaid letter is croſſed or wholly diſobeyed, or that the men named therein are injured (though ſeveral of them were great and godly men) as it was no injury to Peter and Barnabas, that Paul withſtood and publicly teſtified againſt them for their not walking uprightly according to the truth of the goſpel, and regiſtrating the ſame in his epiſtle to the Galatians.*

If any ſuſpect it as not genuine, or any way vitiated or altered (excepting a few of the foreſaid delations) they ſhall be willingly ſatisfied with a ſight of the autograph written and ſubſcribed by his own hand, which is ſtill preſerved intire.

THE

THE TESTIMONY OF *Mr. JAMES RENWICK,*

To the Truths of God and to his Cauſe, as (at this Time) it is ſtated by the true Preſbyterians of the Church of SCOTLAND, againſt all its adverſaries; which he left in the hands of that valiant Contender, and much honoured ROBERT HAMILTON, before his Entry to the work of the Miniſtry.

MUCH HONOURED SIR,

WHEN I think upon the Lord's glorious way of dealing with you, for theſe ſeveral years by-paſt, I muſt rejoice in the Lord, and praiſe him for the holy wiſdom, majeſty, and good-will, that he hath manifeſted therein, in levelling and ſquaring your condition, ſo exactly according to Zion's caſe, for he hath been teaching you to look at none but himſelf and ſo have his diſpenſations been crying aloud to all that would eſpouſe his quarrel, and chuſe him to be their God. He will let no ones hand be ſeen but his own, in counſelling, aſſiſting, helping, and comforting you, and ſo does he with his wreſtling remnant, who are now redacted to that noble non-plus (O choice neceſſity!) that they have nothing but himſelf to expect any encouragement from. He hath ſeparated you from your land and your brethren, and hath honoured you to contend for him in a ſtrange land; ſo hath he ſeperated his people from theſe who had been called their brethren, but now are diſcovered by ther unfaithfulneſs, helping them to keep up a teſtimony againſt theſe unfaithful dealers. Your acquaintances have lifted up their heels againſt you, ſo hath the Lord's work been ſpurned at by theſe who once pretended friendſhip thereunto; yea, every

ry hand hath been againſt you; and why? but becauſe the Lord's hand hath been with you. O noble hand! O mighty hand! ſufficiently able to ſtrengthen againſt all hands! Hitherto he hath not failed you; you have not wanted wherewith to ſtop the mouths of your adverſaries. And as many other things have returned upon you, ſo I doubt not but this great and exceeding weighty affair will return principally upon you, whom the Lord hath made uſe of, as a great mean to open a door for the miniſtry, when the pleaſant remnant could ſee none, and were ready to faint and ſuccumb: So, I ſay, that the contending remnant in ſweet Scotland, and that you, ſo much concerned in this affair, and your worthy brother Earlſtone, may be cleared in what ye have done therein for poor weak empty, unworthy me, upon the account of the Lord's cauſe, which I deſire with my whole ſoul ſingly to own and maintain againſt all its enemies, I find myſelf neceſſarily called before I enter on the great work of the miniſtry, to leave here with you, written and ſubſcribed with mine own hand, my hearty teſtimony to the Lord's truths and cauſe, as it hath been, and this day is ſtated againſt all its enemies and backſliders; that this my teſtimony may be a ſuperadded obligation upon me, and a clearing of the cauſe of you, and of all therein concerned, and may be alſo a teſtimony againſt myſelf, If I ſhall ſlip from any of theſe truths and duties upn the greateſt of hazards; for I know that of myſelf I cannot ſtand, but my ſufficiency is of God, from whom muſt come my help. And indeed I have great reaſon to believe in him that he will help me. I have his word for it, who is a king that cannot nor will not lie. I have ſweet experience for it: but here I do not make experience the ground of faith, but only a good and ſpecial motive to believe. I ſay, I have ſweet experience for it, for I have been caſt upon his care from the womb even untill now. I had few to care for me, neither could I care for myſelf; but he cared for me, and hath brought me through many difficulties and damping diſcouragements, and hath plucked my feet out of many nets that have been laid for me; yea, when as for a long time I fled and ran away from him, yet he ſtill purſued and gave not over until that he overtook me, and made me (O exalted be his holy name for ever!) turn my face toward himſelf. When as I was undoing myſelf, and alſo miſled by theſe ſitters-at-eaſe in this day of Zion's trouble, that backſliding company of miniſters and profeſſors in the church of Scotland, who firſt and laſt have deſtroyed the Lord's vineyard he gave me no reſt until that he got me out from amongſt them he took me by the hand and tenderly led me, he himſelf only being my teacher; for he took ſuch a way in it, that I could ſee no ones hand in it but his own; for I may

ſay, I got neither one nor other of the pleaſant remnant, whom the Lord had cleared his truths unto, (for my help) to converſe with, until that he had brought me to great clearneſs in all the heads of our church's ſufferings: And I deſire to ſpeak this to the praiſe of him who is given a leader and commander to his people; and to encourage all to ſeek unto him, and wait on him for teaching, for I can aſſure them, he will not ſuffer theſe to be kept in the dark, whom he hath ordained light unto, even though many outward and ordinary means cannot be had: We have a ſure word of prophecy, let us take heed thereunto as unto a light ſhining in a dark place. And as to the time of his ſeeking and finding me out, and helping unworthy me to join, though in great weakneſs, with the remnant of his heritage, with that pleaſant handful, that perſecuted party, whom only he was honouring to keep up a teſtimony for himſelf; it was when they were in a moſt ſad, depreſſed and diſcouraging condition, after the death of that valiant chariot-man of Iſrael, Mr Donald Cargil, who was honoured to ſeal his Maſter's truths with his blood; and when the pleaſant remnant (as they have been ſince and are at this day) had none to carry the ſtandard of the Lord, none to declare his counſel to them, none to ſet the trumpet to their mouths. All miniſters and teachers belonging to that church, both in the land, and forth thereof, having fled from the Lord's camp, and thereby involved in a courſe of rebelion againſt the Lord of hoſts, there was no outward encouragement for me: I ſay this not, that ever I ſought after any, but to let the Lord's hand be the more ſeen in it, to the praiſe of his free grace; for (I deſire to bleſs his holy name for it) I may ſay that I had never either my thought, or my eye upon outward encouragement, and yet I got ſtill in a wonderful manner, enough thereof. And I can aſſure all men, the leſs they have their eyes upon it, the more of it they will be ready to meet with. O what ſhall I ſay! This is the way, this is the way, and I can ſay ſo much for it from experience, that I no ſooner laid ſalvation (in any meaſure) to heart, but the Lord drew me from that backſlidden mixed multitude; and I no ſooner began to leave them but the Lord and his ſalvation began to be precious in mine eyes: But, O! when I look back upon the length of time that I was little concerned with the glory of God, and with the precious immortal ſoul, that word ſounds in mine years, *What profit had ye now in theſe things whereof ye are now aſhamed for the end of theſe things is death?* Rom. vi. 21. And alſo when I reflect upon the length of time that I was miſled with that church-deſtroying party, I am made to ſay, *Wo is me that I ſojourned ſo long in Meſech, and dwelt ſo long in the tents of Kedar*, Pſal. cxx. 5. But by the Lord's grace

grace now I am what I am. O for the tongue and pen of the learned, that I might ſpeak and write his praiſe! His love to me is and hath been wonderful, and his tender mercies have been far extended; but wo is me, I have been a ſinful, froward unthankful, and ſelf-deſtroying creature, yet the Lord hath many times taught me to go, taking me by the arms, when I knew not that he healed me. O! who is like unto him! If any have reaſon to proclaim him a merciful and gracious God, ſurely I have reaſon to do it. And now he is calling me (O free, free grace, and O great honour!) to carry his name and to go and cry out that he is wronged, that he is wronged, and againſt a God-diſhonouring, Chriſt-dethroning, and heaven-contemning generation. I ſay, that he is calling me by his ſpeaking diſpenſations, and by his word, wherewith, powerfully, he hath ſtopped both the mouth and the heart from objecting any thing againſt the ſame; for not only before this, he gave me his call to that work, but even when the heart was objecting many things againſt the ſetting about it at this time, from the ſenſe of ſelf-emptineſs and weakneſs, he powerfully told me, *that he had laid help upon one that was mighty*, Pſal. lxxxix. 19. what then need I fear? My ſufficiency is of himſelf. And (O! praiſe to his holy name) I find him well pleaſed with me, that in ſuch a weak caſe I ſhould even have offered myſelf to that great work, and accepted his call thereunto. Indeed when he gives a ſpecial call he gives ay the heart to embrace the ſame. I ſay, I find him well pleaſed therewith, and taking it even as a ſmall token of my ſmoking love to himſelf, and to his cauſe, when now it is ſo cried out againſt. But, O bleſſed be his holy name, *I love him becauſe he firſt loved me*, 1 John iv. 16. and when I aſk, why is it, that at ſuch a time, when I am ſo weak, ſo unfit, ſo empty of human learning, he calls me forth? He anſwers me, That the excellency of the power may be ſeen to be of himſelf, and not of me, 2 Cor. iv. 7. I cannot ſay but I ſee much of his love in the time and manner of it; for now I am put to have nothing but himſelf to look unto. He will have me to receive all ay from his own hand, and to have nothing in me, or without himſelf, whereunto I may truſt; *for it will not be by might nor by power, but by my ſpirit, ſaith the Lord*, Zech. iv. 6. O, his Spirit, his Spirit! where that is, there will be nothing wanting.

But to come to the matter purpoſed, and, as I was ſaying before, that the Lord's people, and you, much honoured ſir, whom the Lord hath made ſo concerned with poor, weak, unworthy me in this great affair, may be cleared and exonered, whatever be the end; and alſo that my ſincere and ingenuous deſires, for the advancement of the Lord's cauſe, in ſweet covenanted Scotland, may be the more clearly made

known, I here leave in your hands my teſtimony, ſignifying my fixed and deliberate judgment, the Lord having in ſome meaſure, given me light and clearneſs, anent both the ſins and duties of our day; the latter of which I really and ſincerely reſolve, in the Lord's ſtrength, plainly to adhere unto, and diligently to propogate; and the former, to witneſs, teſtify, and cry out againſt, particularly and zealouſly, upon all hazards, as the Lord ſhall aſſiſt in the ſtation that he puts me into.

And, 1. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to the ſcriptures of truth contained in the Old and New Teſtaments, in the divine authority thereof, 2 Pet. i. 19, 20, 21. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. in the fulneſs thereof, being a full and the only rule of faith and manners, Iſa. viii. 20. Gal. vi 16. 2 Tim. iii 16, 17.; ſo that nothing ought to be added thereto, and nothing taken therefrom; and nothing brought into the houſe of God, either in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, or government, without or contrary to his royal will therein contained, Deut. iv. 2.; and in the holineſs or ſpirituality thereof, Rom. vii. 12.; and particularly to theſe great truths, O great truths! as, 1. That there is a God, and that that God is three in one and one in three, 1 John v. 7. 2. That he is merciful yet juſt, juſt yet merciful, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. 3. That he is only merciful in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, with whom (O glory to God and good-will towards men) that covenant of redemption was made, Pſalm xl. 6, 7, 8. Matth. iii. 17 4. That in and thro' which covenant of redemption only, he entered into the covenanant of grace with his elect, Eph. i. 3,——7. 5. That in the covenant of grace he hath promiſed to help us to perform the conditions required on our parts, Jer. xxxi. 33. Iſa. lix. 21. So that it is only the perfect and complete righteouſneſs of his Son, which muſt make us free before God; yet in order to the making of his righteouſneſs to be ours, it muſt be imputed by his Spirit, and received by faith, producing ſanctification as the fruit thereof, 1 John iii. 23. Therefore they that think their life to be in God, they muſt alſo know that life to them muſt come from him.

2. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to our confeſſion of faith, larger and ſhorter catechiſms, firſt agreed upon by the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter, and approved by the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland, to our covenants national and ſolemn league, to the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of the church of Scotland, according thereunto, and to our acknowledgment of ſins and engagement to duties.

3. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to our noble declarations, *viz.* Thoſe publiſhed at Rutherglen, Sanquhar and Lanerk, whereby that wretched tyrant, Charles Stuart, was faithfully rejected

rejected and freely caſt off: And particularly I add my ſeal to that concluſion of the Sanquhar declaration, whereby open war is proclaimed againſt that tyrant, and that malignant party, deſiring in my place and ſtation to keep up the ſame againſt them, theſe Amalekites, with whom the Lord will have war for ever. I add alſo my ſeal to that ſolemn bond commonly called the Queesferry papers, in all the articles thereof, according to the true and corrected copy.

4. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to all the faithful teſtimonies given to the truth by our noble and worthy martyrs, particularly theſe that have been given upon that head, *viz.* the declining altogether of that man, Charles Stuart. But I hope none will underſtand me to include here that teſtimony given out in the names of theſe three well-meaning men, William Gogar, Chriſtopher Millar, and Robert Sangſter, which was penned by that blaſphemous man John Gib.

5. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to all the faithful wreſtlings of the Lord's people belonging to the church of Scotland, either in the land or forth thereof, particularly that noble battle fought in Holland againſt Mr M'——, for his counſelling (yea ſo peremptorily) to join with that church-rendering man, Mr F——-——, in his miniſtry at Rotterdam, who had ſo betrayed the Lord's cauſe, and condemned the faithful wreſtlings and cleanly ſufferings of the church of Scotland, and came over thither by virtue of that tyrant, Charles Stuart, his commiſſion.

6. I add my teſtimony and ſeal to all the appearances of the Lord's people for truth in Scotland, ever ſince the beginning of our reformation; but particularly in our latter times, at Pentland, Drumclog, Bothwel-bridge and Airds-moſs, where our valiant worthies fell. And, O what ſhall I ſay more! but I deſire with my whole ſoul to add my teſtimony and ſeal to every thing that hath been done for truth, either by word, write or action.

As on the one hand I deſire to declare plainly for truth, yea all truth; ſo on the other hand I likewiſe deſire to declare freely againſt ſin, yea all ſin, teſtifying and bearing witneſs againſt all the wrongs done to the holy Lord God, ever ſince the reformation began in our land, againſt popery prelacy (that is, church-government by arch-biſhops, biſhops, their chancellors and commiſſaries, deans, deans and chapters, arch-decons, and the other eccleſiaſtical officers depending on that hierarchy) eraſtianiſm, quakeriſm, ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs; againſt all the cauſes of the Lord's wrath with our land, and againſt all the ſteps of our defection. And particularly,

(1.) I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the condemning, hindering and neglecting the purging of the judicatories and armies of the kingdom in the year 1649. and afterwards, from ſcandalous and diſaffected perſons to the Lord's cauſe, that the ſame might be made up of chriſtian zealous men, of known integrity and affection thereunto, as the Lord in his word hath commanded, Exod. xviii. 21. Deut. i. 15, 16, 17. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7. Deut. xxiii. 9, 14.

(2.) I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt theſe public reſolutions of church and ſtate, for bringing in the malignant party, firſt to the army, then to the judicatories, which included theſe heinous iniquities: 1. A joining with the enemies of God and his cauſe, clearly contrary to the ſcriptures, 2 Chron. xix. 2, 3. Iſa. xxx. 1, 2, 3. 1. A manifeſt receding from the public acknowledgment of ſins and engagement to duties, Jer. ii. 35, 36, 37. 3. A turning the ſtate of our caſe upſide down, and alſo a weakning and ſtumbling of the godly in the land, Jer. xxiii. 14. Ezek. xiii. 22.

(3.) I bear witneſs and teſtify againſt the authorizing of commiſſioners to cloſe a treaty with this now rejected tyrant, for the clothing him with power upon his ſubſcribing ſuch demands as were ſent unto him, after he had given many clear evidences of his enmity to the work and people of God, and was ſtill continuing in the ſame; and then admitting him to the crown, notwithſtanding of new diſcoveries of his malice and diſaffection towards the Lord's work; all which was done contrary to the word of God, Exod. xviii 21. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. 2 Chron. xix. 6, 7, 8.; and contrary to the declaration of the general aſſembly of the church of Scotland, July 27. 1649. whereby it is declared, that magiſtrates and their power are ordained of God; ſo they are not to walk in their power according to their own will, but according to the law of equity and righteouſneſs, *&c.* Moreover, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the keeping him in power and owning him any ways as king, ſince he ſo wickedly broke the covenant and his coronation oath, which he did ſwear with his hand lifted up to the moſt high God. But more eſpecially, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt all who have any manner of way owned and acknowledged him, and who have not been poſitive and free in declining of him ſince he was freely and formally caſt off by our noble declaration publiſhed at Sanquhar, which formal rejecting of him was both lawful and neceſſary.

As to the firſt, *viz.* the lawfulneſs thereof, that is clear from Exod. xviii. 21. For if they be men of truth, fearing God and hating covetouſneſs, who are to be ſet over a Chriſtian people, ſo conſequently they muſt be ſuch who are to be continued over them; but it is well known that he neither fears God nor regards man, being an avowed enemy to all godlineſs

godlineſs and a profeſſed friend to all impiety: And if it be ſin to put a wicked man in power, the continuance of him therein muſt be a greater ſin, becauſe there may be a miſtake in the one which cannot be in the other, though many were not miſtaken in him. And 2. That it was the land's great ſin, adding that to all their other ſins, their luſting after that Charles Stuart, our worthy proteſting party acknowledges in the cauſes of the Lord's wrath, and alſo ſad experience hath made us ſee the Lord's diſpleaſure greatly manifeſted againſt us for the ſame, and heavily felt by that man's being made a rod over the heads and upon the backs of the Lord's people, ever ſince his getting the crown. Therefore their ſin muſt be greater, who will yet, notwithſtanding thereof, adhere to and acknowledge him. Let us look to the practice of Libnah in the ſcripture, and the practice of our own and other nations in hiſtory, and we will ſee what they have done. And we dare adventure to ſay it, that none of them had ſo great reaſon as we, for what we have done. Was there ever a caſe like unto ours? Where do we read of any who ever ſo wickedly did cut the neck of ſuch a noble conſtitution of church and ſtate, as he did with one blow; eſpecially who was ſo ſtraitly and often ſworn to the Lord in defence and preſervation of the ſame, and admitted by the people only upon that condition, to be owned no longer than he ſtood to the performance thereof; according both to the law of God, which allows only kings conditional explicitely, and alſo according to the eight act of the parliament of K. James VI. enacting that all bearing rule at any time over the realm, ſhould, at the time of their coronation, make their faithful promiſe by oath unto God, that they ſhall maintain and defend the true religion of Jeſus Chriſt, and gainſtand all things contrary to the ſame, *&c.* which thing he did. But from what was known before, and hath been felt ſince, it may be clearly ſeen, that he never intended performance. Therefore he having broken all ties that could bind man, the people are no more tied to him, nor can be, unleſs they tie themſelves to a yoke of tranſgreſſion and rebellion againſt God.

And if it ſhould be objected, that the third article of our ſolemn league and covenant binds us to defend his perſon and authority——We anſwer, That article is only conditional, binding us no otherwiſe to him than in the defence of the true religion and liberties of the kingdom, as it is there in expreſs terms. But now, he having broken that condition, and inſtead of defending and maintaining true religion and civil liberties, he hath broken down and deſtroyed both; ſo that in nowiſe can that be ſuſtained which our backſliders, void both of the ſpirit of zeal and knowledge, have ſo frequently in their mouths, *viz.* though he hath broken to us,

yet

yet let us keep to him; for by ſo ſaying, they make that condition in the fore-mentioned article, and alſo often reiterated in the coronation oath, to be nothing but a mocking of God and a cheating of men. For the more clear uptaking whereof I oppone the ſixth article of that ſame ſolemn league, which is morally and continually binding, wherein we are ſworn that we ſhall never ſuffer ourſelves, directly nor indirectly, by whatſoever combination, *&c.* to be divided from this bleſſed union, *&c.* together with the ſecond article, wherein we ſwear to endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, *&c.* without reſpect of perſons: Charles himſelf is not there exempted.

I ſhall not take up time to ſpeak againſt the fooliſh and needleſs pretences of theſe who ſay, that the *primores regni* (or chief men of the kingdom, as they call them) behoved to concur with the rejection of that tyrant ere it could be legally done; for I altogether deny that, becauſe it is manifeſt, that the power of government is naturally and radically in the people, unitely in the people, and ſingularly in every one; ſo that any rank, or any company thereof, may, from the privilege which God and the law of nature hath allowed them, caſt off a tyrannous yoke, and ought of neceſſity to do it in ſuch a caſe as ours is this day, when that tyranny is not only a yoke of oppreſſion upon our jaws, but of tranſgreſſion upon our heads; for it is a duty incumbent on all ranks of perſons, and the omiſſion thereof will be charged on every degree, without reſpect to the high or to the low, Jer. xxii. 1, 3. compared with xxxvii. 2. And by that ſame power they may ſet up governors over themſelves, men fearing God, who may rule them according to the royal will of the ſupreme Lawgiver, whenever they are in caſe to do it. I grant, indeed, it were deſirable to ſee the *primores regni* men fearing God, and zealous for his cauſe; yet when they are the principal men in all wickedneſs, making themſelves ſlaves to all manner of ſin, and ſervants to Satan, as at this day they do in Scotland, being the tyrant's own creatures, the want of them can neither exeem the people from their duty, nor deprive them of their privileges. Hence from all this, and much more that might be ſaid, I conclude the lawfulneſs of rejecting that wretched tyrant; yea, not only ſo, but alſo the neceſſity thereof. Yet, that I may ſpeak a word more particularly to the neceſſity of it,

Let us look back upon what he did, when firſt he was admitted to the crown, notwithſtanding (as hath been inſinuated before) of his often ſwearing to the contrary with his hand lifted up to the moſt high God; how that, I ſay, he, avowedly breaking all theſe ties both to God and man, cut the neck of our noble conſtitution of church and ſtate government,

ment, arrogating to himſelf a blaſphemous ſupremacy in matters eccleſiaſtic, altogether conſiſtent with the kingly office of our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and an arbitrary power in matters civil, by virtue of the ſame ſupremacy, altogether deſtructive of the liberties of the kingdom, contrary to the very law of nature, making his ſupremacy in the one and the other ſo collateral and co-equal, that by him it is made eſſential to the crown by the act explanatory of the ſupremacy, declaring the ſame to be inherent to the crown to him and his ſucceſſors; ſo that he cannot be owned nor acknowledged as king, nor any ſucceeding upon that foundation, be who they will, without denying of Jeſus Chriſt, and being guilty of leſe-majeſty againſt the King of kings, who will not give his glory to another, Iſaiah xlii. 8. Therefore the rejecting of that wretched tyrant, and all depending on him, is not only lawful, but alſo neceſſary, to all thoſe who deſire to be ſubjects to Jeſus Chriſt. And none can pretend any diſtinction, unleſs they would cheat themſelves out of the truth, and become guilty of his blaſphemous robbery of the Son of God; for he hath no civil power diſtinct from his ſupremacy; that, I ſay, his ſupremacy is the foundation of all power he pleads for, and takes all acknowledgement of him as an acknowledgement thereof. And why may we not? ſeeing it is made eſſential to the crown. And moreover, doth not that general act reſciſſory, by virtue of that ſupremacy (whereby he reſcinded whatever our parliaments had done in favour in the reformed religion) introduce another kind of civil government which ſo much troubles mens tongues and wearies our ears, but a conſtitution of pure tyranny, a fabric of rebellion againſt God, upheld by the pillar of perjury, and cemented with the blood of the ſaints.

Moreover, I cannot here paſs by the vanity of theſe who, blindfolding themſelves, uſe ſo to diſtinguiſh, *viz.* they cannot own or acknowledge ſome of his civil acts, ſuch as, impriſoning, ſtigmatizing, and murdering the Lord's people, yet they muſt hold by that which they call his power: but O what blindneſs does that bewray! for there can nothing in him be conſidered, but that which they call his power in the eſtabliſhment and exerciſe thereof. Now, the eſtabliſhment is clear to be upon the ruins of the work of God, and our engagements to him; the foundation thereof being that blaſphemouſly arrogated ſupremacy, with the act explanatory thereof, whereby ſacrilege and monſtrous tyranny are eſtabliſhed by a law decree, and exerciſed by that general act reſciſſory, declaration againſt our covenants, murdering of the Lord's people, bearing down of his work, *&c.* So then let them ſpeak their minds, and ſay, Whether they think the e-

ſtabliſhment of that power, or the exerciſe thereof, is to be owned. If they own and acknowledge the one, the acknowledgment of the other will neceſſarily follow upon it. Is not the one the root, and the other the branches? the one the ſpring, and the other the ſtreams? O poor, poor Scotland! thou art now become a home born ſlave, becauſe thou waſt not valiant in contending for the truth. The Lord hath, in his juſt judgment, corrected thee for breaking his commandments, by joining with the people of theſe abominations, and deſiring a king, whom he hath given thee in his wrath, and will take him away in his diſpleaſure. But bleſſed be the name of the Lord, who hath ſtirred up a pleaſant party of valiant and noble heroes, whom he hath honoured to pull the crown off that tyrant's head, in order to the crowning of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt again in Scotland, and helped ſome of them to ſeal the ſame with their precious blood; to whoſe ſufferings even upon that head, I deſire with my whole heart and ſoul to add my teſtimony and ſeal, certifying it to all men, that if ever I had the Lord's countenance and peace in any duty, it was in rejecting of that poor wretched tyrant. O remember what the Lord is calling for at your hands in theſe loud crying commands, Iſa. viii. 11, 12. 2 Cor. vi 17. Rev. xviii. 4, 5, 6.

(4) As I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt all that own that rejected tyrant, or any of his acts and laws, (abuſively ſo called) in their profeſſion; ſo alſo I bear witneſs and teſtify againſt all that own him any way in their practice, by ſubjecting themſelves to him and his demands, and particularly againſt the paying of that dreadful ceſs, whereby they bear down the work and people of God; that ſinful locality whereby they decline the Lord's cauſe, and ſtrengthen wicked men in their wickedneſs, eſpecially againſt the paying of that which they call their town locality, *viz.* money to theſe ruffian bloody ſoldiers for their beds; becauſe it is the thing that ſome men, more out of ſelf-love than love to God, plead for; but let them pretend what they will therein, they do evil that good may come of it, and their condemnation is juſt: Againſt the paying of that anuity, whereby they pay tithes to Baal's prieſts; againſt the paying of feu duty, and every thing that contributes to the upholding of that throne of iniquity.—In the paying of any of which things, they deſtroy the Lord's cauſe, and walk contrary to his word, Iſa. viii. 11. 13, *&c.* Jer. xxiii. 14. Alſo I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the furniſhing of any of theſe bloody ſoldiers with meat and drink to themſelves, or proviſion to their horſes, a practice deſtructive to the cauſe and contrary to the will of the Lord, Iſa. lxv. 11, 12, 13. I do not mean here what they violently

rob

rob, but what is given and furniſhed unto them. Moreover, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the compearing before theſe enemies courts, thereby ſtrengthning them in their wickedneſs, and homologating their robbery of God; againſt all bonding, tampering, or complying with them, directly or indirectly: I ſay, indirectly, becauſe ſome men cheat themſelves out of the truth by conniving at the compliance and bargaining of others with the enemies on their account: A practice which condemns the Lord's cauſe, and is diſapproven of himſelf, Jer. ii. 35, 36, 37. and xxiii. 14. Pſalm. l. 18.

(5.) I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the bargaining and entering into tacks of houſes or lands with, or paying of rent to theſe public graſſators, who for their being ſignal enemies to the work of God, have got from that tyrant a gift, as they term it, of thoſe mens eſcheits, who have been at any public appearance for the Lord's cauſe, ſuch as Pentland or Bothwel-bridge; by which means they clearly condemn the faithful wreſtlings of the church, ſealed with ſo much precious blood, and conſent to the violent forfeiture of their former maſters for their faithfulneſs to the Lord. Alſo I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the entering into tacks or bargains of houſes or lands with, or paying of rent to theſe church-deſtroying men, who have been at Pentland, Bothwel-bridge, or any other appearances for the Lord's cauſe, and have been forfeited upon that account, yet have redeemed their forfeiture by condemning the Lord's cauſe and the noble teſtimonies given thereunto, ſealed with ſo much precious blood, and making themſelves tranſgreſſors by juſtifying the enemies in all that they have done; for in that caſe to bargain with them, enter into tack, or pay them rent, is an homologation of that new holding which they have of their lands, by burying, robbing, and denying the Lord's cauſe.

(6.) I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt all that may join in arms or confederacies with the indulged, with duke Hamilton's party, the parliament of England, theſe miniſters, or any that have kept up correſpondence with them, it being ſo contrary to the word of God, 2 Chron. xix. 1, 2. Iſa. xxx. 1, 2, 3.

As I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the wrongs done to the holy Lord by all ranks, the tyrant and his accomplices, and all who ſtrengthen the throne of iniquity, ſo alſo I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt that church-deſtroying party, the miniſters of Scotland, for the great and many wrongs that they have done to the Lord's cauſe, both firſt and laſt. And particularly,

1*ſt*, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt their ſinful and ſhameful ſurrendering up of the privileges of the Lord's houſe into the hands of men, by leaving their flocks, as hirelings, when they ſaw the wolf coming, Iſa. x. 12.; whereby they did virtually non-miniſtrate themſelves, by their becoming ſervants of men, not remembering that they were ambaſſadors for Chriſt, 2 Cor. v. 20. nor minding the practice of the holy apoſtles, Acts iv. 19, 20. 29.

2*dly*, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt them for their handling the word deceitfully, for their ambiguous way of doctrine, and not being particular in their applications, unleſs it had been againſt theſe whom the Lord raiſed up to be zealous and faithful, and by this means called duty ſin, and ſin duty, making light to become darkneſs, ſo that many poor things did ſtumble and fall. O ſad, ſad, to think on the blood of ſouls which is in the ſkirts of theſe men.

3*dly*, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt that church-deſtroying indulgence, firſt and laſt, whereby that idol was worſhipped in his blaſphemous ſupremacy, and which hath wrought to the hands, and accompliſhed the deſigns of the malignant adverſary all alongſt. I bear witneſs and teſtify againſt the compliance therewith, and connivance thereat, both of miniſters and people; againſt ſilence thereat, and unfaithfulneſs in not witneſſing faithfully againſt the ſame; yea, and againſt all the ſins of the time, as the Lord hath commanded, Iſaiah lviii. 1.

4*thly*, As I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt theſe miniſters, for their unfaithfulneſs all alongſt; ſo alſo I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt their malice at theſe whom the Lord ſtirred up to be faithful in their places and ſtations, particularly their cenſuring of worthy Meſſrs Welwood, Kid, and Cameron, for faithfulneſs to their Lord and Maſter; Mr Cameron being cenſured merely for preaching againſt that ſinful indulgence. Alſo I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt them for their falſe calumnies and reproaches caſt upon the way and people of God, particularly on thoſe fore-named worthies, and Mr Cargill, all faithful meſſengers of Jeſus Chriſt; and on the much honoured Robert Hamilton, that valiant contender, both at home and abroad, for his Maſter's truths, againſt whom their hands have been in a ſignal manner, becauſe he hath been honoured of the Lord to have his hand againſt their treachery. O Scotland, Scotland! many paſtors have deſtroyed the Lord's vineyard in thee, O Scotland, Jer. xii. 10. Thy prophets, O Scotland, are like the foxes in the deſarts, they have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge, for the houſe of Iſrael to ſtand in the battle, in the day of the Lord. They have ſeduced the people ſaying, Peace,

Peace, peace, when there was no peace. One built up a wall, and, lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar, Ezek. xxxiii. 4, 5. 10.; but bleſſed be the Lord's moſt holy name, who hath delivered his people out of their hands, and performed his promiſe, Ezek. xxxii. 23.

5*thly*, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt people's joining in any part of their miniſtry with any of theſe Scottiſh miniſters this day in Scotland, or forth thereof, becauſe they have all betrayed the Lord's cauſe and fled from his camps; and, whatever diſagreement may be amongſt themſelves, yet they, like Pilate and Herod, become good friends by their joining in one body in condemning and reproaching the pleaſant witneſſing remnant, off whoſe hands the Lord hath taken many noble teſtimonies, ſealed with much precious blood. And particularly, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt people's joining in any part of their miniſtry with theſe men, *viz.* Meſſrs W——— K——, J—— R——, T—— H——elder in Scotland, J—— H——— in England, T——— H—— younger at Utrecht, G—— B——— at Rotterdam, and that bitter and baſe reproacher J——— W———. Not that I think theſe men worſe than the reſt, but becauſe ſome plead ſo much for them that they are better; but to me they are all in one category, and they ought to be ſo unto all men. For,

1. They join hand and iſſue with the reſt, in pleading for defection, in reproaching and condemning our cauſe, our worthy contenders, and their faithful teſtimonies ſealed with much precious blood.

2. They ſtand on the other ſide, and in the croſs way to cut off theſe that do eſcape of Jacob, Obad. 11, 12, 13, 14. therefore ſhame ſhall cover them, and they ſhall be cut off for ever, verſe 10.

3. They handle the Lord's word deceitfully, making it like a noſe of wax to ſerve their turns, miſapplying it againſt thoſe who have it on their ſide.

4. Never one of them profeſſes to be faithful, yet they are, Reuben like, unſtable as water, profeſſing one thing at one time, and another thing at another, one thing to one perſon, and another thing to another. But O praiſe to the Lord who hath helped ſome to obey his command, Prov. xix. 27. xxiv. 21. 2 Theſſ. iii. 6. 14

6*thly*, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt Mr T——— D——— for the offence he gave to that ſociety he was in at Utrecht, in firſt agreeing ſo poſitively and peremtorily with that ſound concluſion, *viz.* that it was unlawful to hear that church betraying man, Mr F——— at Rotterdam, preach, and then going immediately and hearing him; and

I teſtify

I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt all joining with the ſad Mr T———D———in his miniſtry, while that he ſtands to the defence of, and will not acknowledge the ſame, and until that ammendment be ſeen of his other groſs practices.

7thly, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt joining in his miniſtry with that man Mr P———

1. For his refuſing to come out to the work of the Lord, and being uſeful to his people in this ſad day, when they had none to take them by the hand, and none to exhort to duty and dehort from ſin.

2. Becauſe he is not clear as to what is peoples duty, and unwilling that they ſhould obey the Lord's command, Rom. xvi. 17. and avoid ſuch as cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which they had learned.

8thly, Notwithſtanding of his being hitherto helped to contend in many things valiantly againſt the adverſaries, yet I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt that man J——R———:

1. For his unſuitable withdrawing from theſe who were both ſtraight and zealous, and joining in with a company of perſons who are a ſcandal to the way of God, and reproach to truth; ſome of them deſerving death by the law of God and man, and others of them a high degree of church cenſure.

2. For his miſrepreſenting us and our doings, and writting many groſs untruths of us, which is known by all theſe who are members of our general meetings.

9thly, Being in a ſpecial way ſent to this land by the faithful wreſtling true preſbyterian party of the purely reformed church of Scotland, I deſire where-ever I am, or may be, to contend for that cauſe againſt all error, and every thing inconſiſtent with the doctrine of truth. Therefore I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt the vaſt and ſinful toleration of all error and ſectaries in the Belgian church, particularly their giving places of power and truſt to that erroneous church-deſtroying party of Cocceian principles; alſo againſt their ſinful formalities, ſuch as they uſe in the adminiſtration of the ſacraments, and ſuch as their formal prayers, which their profeſſors and doctors uſe in their public and private colleges; and alſo againſt all their ſuperſtitious cuſtoms, ſuch as their obſerving of holy feaſt-days, as they call them, the organs in their churches, and the like; all which they have as the reliques of idolatry; and againſt every other thing amongſt them contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs.

And as, on the one hand, I teſtify and bear witneſs againſt all theſe ſuperſtitions, ſo, on the other hand, I add my teſtimony and ſeal to any faithful contending that hath been in this

this land againſt the ſame, by ſtrangers or by the natives thereof, ſuch as, Mr Coolman, his contending againſt the foreſaid ſins, as alſo Mr Brakell, his teſtimony given at Leewarden, aſſerting the rights and privileges of Jeſus Chriſt in his own houſe, and freely declining any magiſtrates uſurping thereof.

Now, much honoured Sir, I have here, with all brevity poſſible, left my mind, my fixed and deliberated judgment of all matters in our day, having ſtudied to be plain and particular in every thing, for it is that which the Lord is calling for at the hands of all who deſire to be contenders for his precious truths. Oh! we ought not ſo to ſpeak in his matters, as that equivocation or ambiguity may lurk in our words, ſo that they are ſtill needing a commentary; and I am ſure, they who know what peace as to duty is, will be made to find no ſmall piece in plain dealing for their Lord and Maſter, in all things ſeeking his honour, and not the credit of any man, the great failing in which hath broken the church of Scotland. Therefore, through his grace and ſtrength, I firmly reſolve to be plain, free, and faithful for him, in the ſtation which he is now calling me unto: But his way of dealing hath been ſo with me this long time, and eſpecially of late, that I think he is training me up for another work, which alſo he may ſhortly put in my hand, *viz.* the ſealing of all theſe precious truths with my blood, as well as the ſubſcribing them with my hand. And O, how honourable! how glorious and how acceptable a work would that be, if he give ſtrength and frame ſufficient, for which I deſire to rely and depend upon him. Yet if his holineſs ſhall not call me thereunto, I muſt reverence his gracious way of dealing with me, ſeeking me thereby to be the more fit for this work; for, at this day, none ſhould ſet about it, but ſuch whom he makes denied to their life, and to all things in the preſent world. O that he would make poor me ſo to be in the day, when the manifeſtation thereof is called at my hand; but be before me what ſo may, O! I am many ways obliged to run for him any of his errands upon all hazards; for in a ſpecial manner I hold my life of him, having wonderfully got a new tack of it from himſelf, when men thought to have taken it from me. O what ſhall I ſay of him: He is God, he is God, and a wonderful, kind, and merciful condeſcending God unto me. Now, O Zion's friend, covenanted Scotland's friend, and my dear friend, let us join hand in hand, in order to the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord, in the ſtations he puts us into, and ſet ourſelves againſt all men who are profeſſing or practiſing

againſt

againſt the ſame. And my ſoul deſires to bleſs that holy God, who hath made you hitherto a brazen wall and an iron pillar againſt them, ſeeking only his honour and glory, and not the friendſhip and favour of men. O go on valiantly in his way! Ye have many ſweet (O ſweet) experiences of his helping you, and when manieſt hands were againſt you, his hand, O praiſe to his holy name, hath been moſtly with you, yea, and becauſe of his hands being with you, the hands of men have been againſt you: Becauſe he was a friend, and was honouring you, they became your enemies. O rejoice, and again, I ſay, rejoice, becauſe he hath thought you worthy to ſuffer ſtraits, diſtreſſes, and ſweet reproaches, for his name's ſake. O theſe noble badges of honour that theſe reproaches are, eſpecially theſe caſt upon you by that backſliding and church-deſtroying company of miniſters in Scotland, and forth thereof, belonging to that nation; and do not think that they will let you alone yet, for they ſet themſelves againſt all that are zealous for God and his covenant, but in a ſpecial manner againſt you, for which my ſoul deſires to honour you, craving, from my real affection to yourſelf, and as an honour put upon me, that there may be kept up betwixt us a mutual correſpondence and heart ſympathy one with another, deſiring to believe that the Lord will help and honour us to keep his way. So leaving you, and the Lord's cauſe, covenanted ſweet Scotland's cauſe (which only is our concernment) upon his own hand, who can wiſely, O wiſely, manage his own affairs:

Having written and ſubſcribed this teſtimony with mine own hand at Groningen, the fourteenth day of April, one thouſand ſix hundred and eighty-three years, I deſire to remain, a friend to Zion's friends, and an enemy to her enemies, and (much honoured ſir) your aſſured friend and ſervant in the Lord.

JAMES RENWICK.

FINIS.

The SUBSCRIBERS NAMES for the Second Edition of Mr. Renwicks SERMONS, &c.

Subſcribers given in by John Glen, merchant Port Glaſgow.

Port Glaſgow,

JOHN RITCHIE ſhip maſter
James Kinloch ſhoemaker
Hugh M'Murtrie copper ſmith
John Baird fleſher
William Holm ſmith
Andrew Logan miller
James Wingate ſmith
Miſs Mary Scot
Iſobel Barr ſervant
Alexander Laird weaver
Alexander M'Farlane taylor
James Glen ditto
James Sinclair tide waiter
John Carſwell gardner
Patrick Houſton wright

In Greenock.

Archibald M'Goun merchant
John M'Kellar ditto
Peter Mitchel ditto
Alexander M'Wattie candle maker
Daniel Foulis book binder
James M'Alliſter ſhoemaker
Barbara M'Callum
Barbara Nicol
Alexander M'Culloch fleſher
Alexander Scot farmer in Hole
William Scot dito there
William Shaw ditto in Bue
James Shaw ditto there
Thomas Rennie gardner
William Ruſſel maſon
Archibald M'Kellar wright
Peter M'Beath ſhoemaker
William Warder farmer Murdiſton
Margaret Watſon in Drumfrocher
Robert Kenedy cooper
William Graham copper ſmith
Duncan Marquis merchant
John Dun grocer
George Nicol weaver

In Inerſkip.

Ninian Warden ſchool maſter
James Shearer farmer
John Miſler farmer in Divert
Robert Crawford ditto in Kingſton
Matthew Muir malter
James Kerr
Archibald Colhoun flax dreſſer
William M'Fie wright
Alexander Thomſon weaver
William Orr
James Lyon ſailor
John Creſwall ſhoemaker
James Cochran ditto
James Scot in Homſton
James Orr
John Miller weaver
John Kerr ditto
David Bogg cooper
James Hunter merchant
Archibald Boog ſhip maſter
John Shearer fleſher
Matthew Wilſon wheel wright
Robert Cochran chapman

In Largs.

William Wilſon of Hailley
William Paterſon vintner
Alexander M'Leran taylor
Archibald Frazer wright
Archibald Wilſon ſhoemaker
Daniel Campbell ditto
John Smith
William Arbuthnot weaver
William Shearer ditto
James Moddie ditto
Robert Malcom ditto
John Tyer
John Beath cooper
Robert Lang ſmith
Robert Jamieſon ditto
James Colhoun
John Small miller
John Jamieſon wright
John Lead in Quarter
William Lang farmer in Burnſide
James Broadfoot ditto in Milrigs
Andrew Hair ditto Outerward
John Wyllie flax dreſſer

John Crawford of Whitteburn
James Crawford there
William Beath in Halley
John Thomſon in Fairley
Mary Euing there

In Weſt Kilbride.

John Muir of Drumilling
James Miller of Woodſide
John Paterſon farmer there
John workman weaver
Peter Gemmel ditto
John Simſon ditto
Hugh Ramſay ditto
Alexander Simſon ditto
Robert Gemmil ditto
David Pollock ditto
John Raſade vintner
William Malcom
James Duncan tanner
Robert Scot miller
Thomas Wilſon ditto
Allan Spier farmer in Kilriſken

In Saltcoats.

The Rev. Mr. Robert Dow miniſter of the goſpel
John Ritchie ſhip-maſter
George Service ditto
John Ewing ditto
Robert M'Kinlay ditto
Allan Stevenſon ditto
James King ditto
Bryce Muir ditto
Magnes Garret ditto
John Johnſton ditto
Thomas Hunter merchant
John Jack ditto
Robert Craig ditto
James Mitchel merchant
John Ritchie ditto
James Biggert weaver
Alexander white ditto
William Orr ditto
Robert Hill ditto
James Belton ditto
Daniel M'Ghie ditto
Robert Workman ditto
Charles Henry ditto
Duncan Kenedy ditto
John M'Millan ditto
Robert Porter ditto
Samuel Cumming ditto
James Brown ditto
Adam Biggar weaver
John Craig ditto
John Kelſo ditto
Robert love ditto
Thomas Service wright
Peter Wilſon carrier
Patrick Montgomery farmer
Mary Lorimer
Mary Hill
Mary Howie
Margaret Miller
William Steel ſtay-maker
William Hill ſailor
John Hamilton maſon
James Watſon wright
John M'Cook ſhoemaker
John Wyllie junr. wright
John Roxburgh baker
Hugh Dunlop carter
William Luſk ſhoemaker
Mary Alexander
Alexander Ritchie cooper
James Fulton wright
James Aiken dyke builder
William Clark taylor
George Murray ſailor
John Raſyde farmer Ardroſſan
Jean Jack
John Galt cooper Dreghorn

In Stevenſon

William Hunter ſmith
James Alexander
Thomas Henderſon weaver
William Meteer ditto
Robert Graham ditto
Alexander Harvie ditto
William Niel ditto
David Bone ditto
Thomas Sair ditto
John Reid ditto
Robert Walker
Jean Walker

In Kilwinning.

Alexander White of Woodſide
James Reid merchant
Joſeph Clark taylor
J. Stuart clock maker
John Ralſton ſhoemaker
Hugh Coutter ſtamp maſter
John Caldwell ſhoemaker
John Hunter maſon

James

James Watt weaver in Bayers
Hugh Dotchon ditto there
James Wilſon ditto there
James Baillie ditto there
Alexander Cochran ditto there
Robert Stuart ditto there
James Knox ditto there
James Baillie junr. ditto there
Alexander Wyllie ditto there
Alexander Petrie ditto
David Service ditto
John Service ditto
Robert Campbell ditto
William Paterſon ditto
William Reid ditto
John Conn ditto
Robert Ruſſel
James Wilſon ditto
Malcolm M'Aulay
Thomas Smith ſailor in Irvine

In Dalray.

David Stuart weaver
John Auld ditto
Robert Dunlop ditto
James Muir ditto
John Craig ditto
James Aiken ditto
Thomas Logan ditto
John Walker ditto
David Boyle ditto
John Semple ditto
James Mackie ditto
Samuel Thomſon ditto
Hugh Oſwald ditto
Robert Ferguſon ditto
William Alexander ditto
John Gavin ditto
Hugh M'Ferſon ditto
William Latta ditto
James Dunlop
John Hunter ditto
Hugh Barclay ſhoemaker
Hugh Kerr farmer in Highfield
John Moriſon weaver in Lochwinoch
John Beith wright there

In Kilmalcolm.

John Chalmers farmer Croſhill
John Holm ditto Glyſide
William Galbraith ditto Peniterſel
John Taylor ditto Auchenleck
Patrick Fleming ditto there
John Fleming farmer Conſton
John Park Auchendars
John Park ſenr. wright
James Crawford of Park wright
Alexander Lang weaver
John Laird wright
Robert Barrie ſhoemaker
William Killoch ditto
William Park weaver
William Orr farmer in Auchenclouch

In Kilallan

James Houſton farmer in Berryhill
Matthew Millar weaver in Midglen
James Wilſon farmer in Snovelbeds
John Hill ditto Kirkton
George Reid ditto Towncroft
John Simſon ditto Meikleſield
John Crawford wright Carnapock
Erſkine

In Cardroſs.

James M'Arthur farmer Clarkhill
John Barton ditto Drumhead
John Forſyth of Gielſton
James Scot there
John Donald Ferrier
Archibald Ritchie
George Orrd printer Cordale
William M'Intyre ditto there
William Walker ditto there
James Campbel ditto there
John Bell print cutter there
Wil. Alexander miln-wright there
Mary Lindſay there
James M'Naught Dalquhurn
John Hall there
Jannet M'Intyre there
John Barr dyer there
James Gay farmer
Robert Bain ditto
Walter Bruce ditto
Walter Bain ditto
Daniel Colquhoun ditto
John Lenox ditto
Robert Smith ditto
John Davie ſhoemaker
Robert Walker ditto
James Donald ditto
James Bain weaver
Ronald Crawford ſailor

In Dumbarton.

Archibald Ewing ſhoemaker

Robert Houſton ſhoemaker
Daniel Mitchel ditto
James M'Kean ditto
Alexander M'Kinzie ditto
Robert Lindſay cooper
John Blair ditto
John Latta ſawer
James Happy ditto
Daniel Rankin Boatman
Janet Craig

In Bonhill.

Smollet M'Lintock Liven printfield
Thomas Service there
Alexander Gardner there
Walter Gay weaver in Ring
Robert Walker ſmith
Michael Lindſay
John Alexander vintner
John Bryce cooper
William Blair taylor in Port
William M Kinlay Auchencarreck
John M'Aliſter there
Alexander M'Aliſter farmer Blairvalt

In Kilmaronock.

Thomas M'Kinlay farmer Blarnile
Alexander Gardner of Finery
David Thomas farmer there
John Hunter in Blairox
John M'Goun in Badhill
John Cunningham of weſt Cameron
Jean M'Lintock
The Rev. Mr John M'Millan miniſter of the goſpel Sandyhills
Mr John John M'Millan preacher of the goſpel
Hugh M'Dougal merchant Glaſgow
Iſobel Muirhead of Sandyhills
Jannet M'Farlane there
Archibald Crawford ferrier Roſneath
Malcolm Turner there

Given in by John Rankin miner in Monigaff.

John Carſon in Iſle of Whithorn
Peter Clokie in Baloray
David Broadfoot in Drommoral
Peter Kie in Blinvals
James Conning in Iſle
William Naring Chippirharran
William Hanna there
James Wright in Kirkinder
Adam M'Candliſh wright in Wigton
Wil. Houſton ſhoemaker in Wigton
Alexander M'Clelland wright there
John Millroy ſhoemaker there
Peggie M'Kie in Monigaff
Peggie M'Clellond there
James Johnſton weaver there
William Clark miner there
William Muir ditto there
Patrick Martin ditto there
Andrew Hunter ditto there
William Miller ditto there
John Rankin ditto there
Patrick M'Millan there
Rob. Dalrymple ſchool-maſter there
John Johnſton baker Newtonſtewart
William Gordon miner there
Hugh Good miner at Craigton mines
John M'Cleland weaver in Torhouſe
Wil. Dewar gardner in Kirochtree

Given in by John Niven travelling Chapman.

John Gibb cooper in Old Cumnock
James Anderſon dyer there
David Kerr there
John Anderſon there
James Pirry there
Andr. Templeton in Auchinleck Par.
Allan Gibſon weaver there
Henry Gibb cooper there
George Arthur there
James Murdoch Kilbarchan pariſh
Wil. Latta portioner in Lochwinnoch
William Fulton farmer in Beith pariſh
Hugh Stevenſon ditto there
William Warnock in Shitterflat there
Andrew M'Farlane taylor in Nielſton
Alexander Wyllie farmer in Dunlop
Alex. Thomſon in Merryhill there
Matthew Lauchland Gauſton pariſh
John Merry maſon there
John Young ſervant there
Jannet Adam ditto there
Robert Meikle cooper there
John Smith there
Ann Train in Sorn pariſh
James Kirkland weaver there
Hugh Crawford ditto there
William Borland ſhoemaker there
Andrew Laperick there
William Laprick there
John Reid ſchool maſter there
John Kennedy in New-Glenluce

Given in by Matthew Anderſon in New mills, in the pariſh of Sorn.

John Mitchel taylor there
John Orr ſervant in Auchmanach
George Edward ſervant there
John Richmont portiōner Carlieth
Andrew Jameſon portioner Newmills
John Borland portioner there
Moſes Smith baker there
William Napier cooper there
John James taylor there
Jannet Livingſton there
Robert Aird darker there
Robert Mitchel maſon there
Hugh Morton wright there
John Smith taylor there
John Labave ſhoemaker there
William Girvan weaver there
Alexander Dykes farmer in Gauſton
John Shields in Green Holm maſon
John M'Limont taylor in Evendale
Andrew Craig farmer in Ploughland
Matthew Anderſon ſervant there
James Oſburn ſervant there
Willam Jamie farmer there
Robert Reid weaver there
Hobel Hamilton there

Given in by Robert M'Grigor farmer in Arnprior.

In Kippen.

James Ure ſhoemaker in Arnfinlay
James Bauk weaver in Arnprior
Alexander M'Lae maſon there
James M'Grigor farmer in Kippen
James Forreſter plowman in Balwhan
John Mill farmer in Braich
Elizabeth Menach in Kippen

In Fintry Pariſh:

James M'Lae farmer in Toadhols
James M'Donald ſhepherd in Backſide
John Lenox feuer in Thornhill
John Sommers ditto there
Adam Bell miller at Doun
Peter M'Arthur farmer in Claſh of Calander
William M'Gibbon farmer in Arngibon

Alexander Gilchriſt merchant Stirling 2 dozen
Thomas Gilchriſt merchant there
John Weir merchant there
John Forreſter weaver there
William Forſyth taylor there
John Keſſon there
John Henderſon in Caſtlehill there
George Dickſon weaver near Stirling

Given in by Thomas Wilſon in Boghall of Biggar

William Clark in Biggerſton
George Clark weaver there
Agneſs Ramage there
Archibald Brown weaver in Bigger
Robert Brown in Hivyſide
James Williamſon in Bigger
John Paterſon in Longlees
Angus Campbel in Bigger
William Vallaney there
Andrew Ritchie tanner there
William Barr weaver in Lanerk
David Orr weaver there
William Lang there
Iſobel Wilſon there
Thomas Pender ſhoemaker there
William Noble in Blendewing
John Gray weaver Boghall of Bigger
Thomas Lindſay there
Alexander Bertram there
John Paterſon there
Michael Porteous of Cealhouea
Thomas Ritchie ſkinner Bigger
John Black merchant there
William Murray there
George Williamſon merchant there
Thomas Spence there
John Tardine there
John Ingles there
John Barclay there
John Brown there
Thomas Young there
Richard Steel there
James Law in the pariſh of Cutter
Alexander Forreſt
George Purde weaver
James Sinclair
Robert Ritchie
John Mitchel in Hatree miln

Given in by John Kirkland Brekenknow in Calder Pariſh

Andrew Minzies there
John Moffit farmer Barony pariſh
Thomas Meffat maſon there
Robert Donald ſmith in Sandyhills
Charles Pender farmer Old Monkland
James Campbel maſon Barony pariſh
John Black farmer there

Given in by Mary Campbell.

James M'Arthur
James Colhoun
John Walker
John Jack
John Sheirer
Hugh Aiken
James Hadden
Charles Colhoun
James Colhoun junr.
John Colhoun
Ritchard Nielings
William Smith
William Anderſon
William Hamilton in Stonehouſe
Robert Dunovie there
James Ewing taylor Renfrew
William Young farmer there
John Jack bookſeller Bo-neſs, 2 doz.
James Davidſon bookſeller Dunfermline, 4 dozen
James Browning maſon at Derval 2 dozen

Given in by John Howie farmer in Lochgoin.

James Muir School maſter at Waterhouſe, 2 dozen
Thomas Brown of Burnſide, 9 dozen
Elias Richmond taylor, 6 dozen
William Howie ſervant in Snedonhall
Margaret Jamieſon ſervant there
John Lambie merchant in Kilmarnock 1 dozen copies
Andrew Jamieſon taylor 1 dozen
Michael Young in Blackwood

In the Pariſh of Stewarton.

David Wyllie portioner in Robertland
Andrew Pickend portioner there
James Muir weaver there
David Brown farmer in Coldhome
Jean Steel in Bloak
William Ferguſon ſaltman there
Jean Love there
John Glen in Caven miln
Robert Nairn farmer in Highcroſs
John Deans portioner in Peacockbank
Elizabeth Deans there
James Kirkland ſmith there
Matthew Wyllie portioner Bridgend
Wil. Logan portr. of Templehouſe
John Caſkie portioner in Croſshill
James Pickend portioner there
David Rawſide farmer in Cauſeyhead
Thomas Ramſay in Burnhouſe
Rob. Wilſon portioner of Cankertoun
William Kerr wright in Crivouch
John Crawford taylor Cancertoun
John Gray portioner of Moſshead
John Patrick in Brayhill
John Wilſon portioner of Spot
James Anderſon taylor in Bloak
John Muir farmer there
John Anderſon taylor there
Martha Crawford there
James Montgomery famr. in Kilbride
John Wyllie ditto there
James Stuart ſervant there
Andrew Howie labourer there
John Smith in Ridghead
Robert Ferguſon in Hallochridge
John Carſwell in Lowkirkmoor
James Miller portioner in Chapletoun
James Wilſon ditto there
James Carr miller in Fulſhaw miln
John Muir flax dreſſer there
Robert Carſwell farmer in Robertland
James Wilſon farmer in Williamſhaw
Alexander Wylie farmer in Croſshill
William Brown in Bottoms
John Brown portioner in Blacklaw
Robert Ferguſon portioner in Over Auchintiber
James Wyllie ſtocking maker in little Moſſide
William Reid portioner of Staikwheel
John Watts portioner Moorhead
Robert Anderſon of Parkhouſe
David Logan portioner of Croſshill
Andrew Calderwood in Templehouſe
Robert Crawford day labourer there
William Gourlie farmer in Ridghead

Alex.

Alexr. Watts farmer in Chapletoun
William Alexander in Gill miln
Hugh Steven ſervant there
Matthew Smith in Kirkhill
James Miller of Gallowayford
John Nairn day labourer in Highcroſs
Robert Nair farmer in Irvinehill
Matthew Gray in Gateſide
Wil. Cameron farmer in Lapefauld

Toun of Stuarton.

John Calderwood weaver
Andrew Calderwood carrier
John Mitchel ſilk weaver
Rober Stuart weaver
John Harvie flax dreſſer
Daniel Stewart carrier
William Gray weaver
Andrew Barr merchant
John Skeough ſmith
John Wyllie taylor
Robert Kerr maſon
John Brown wright
Alexander Fergusſon ſhoemaker
James Jamieſon weaver
Thomas Brown merchant
James Howie inn keeper
James Montgomery merchant
Robert Gardner ditto
John Lyle taylor
William Montgomery flax-dreſſer
Andrew Wilſon bonnet-maker
William Gordon wright
Hugh Montgomery day labourer
John Montgomery flax-dreſſer
William Scot taylor
David Wyllie ditto
James Boyd ſhoemaker
William Wallace weaver
James Ogilvie wright
William Currie bonnet-maker
Thomas Currie ditto
James Picken ditto
James Wyllie ditto
Andrew Picken ditto
James Reyburn ditto
Alexander Dunlop ditto
Thomas Laughland ditto
John Harper ditto
Robert Reyburn ditto
John Montgomery maſon
David Picken yarn merchant
John Dunlop wright
Francis Smith flax-dreſſer
David Calderwood ſhoemaker
David Rankin dyer, 4 copies
David Blackwood weaver
William Cunningham
Robert Alexander taylor

Kirkford of Stuarton.

Alexander Picken portioner
Alexander Reyburn bonnet-maker
James Harper ditto
John Bicket ditto
Robert Knox ditto
Matthew Berrie

The Pariſh of Draghorn.

Alexander Longmuir portioner in Lambroughton
James Galt ſmith there
John Smith farmer there
Gabriel Armour farmer there
James Holborn labourer in Titwood
John Gemmil farmer in Alton
James Brown farmer in Ramſtone
John Smith in Newton
Andrew Muir farmer in Midleton
Hugh Thomſon in Warwickhill
William Todd ſervant there
Jean Fulton there
John Armour farmer in Whiteriggs
Robert Cumming farmer in Overton
John Laught there, 2 copies
John Allan wright in Walk miln
John Gibſon coal carrier in Byres
John Porter in Longſide
John Brown miller in Picertown miln

The Pariſh of Kilmars.

James Miller portioner
William Andrew portioner
John Brown ditto
John Templeton labourer
John Stevenſon ſmith
William Steel maltman
James Gemmil farmer in Hill
Margaret Boyd in Kirkton
John Lowdon younger in Tower
John Lambroughtown in Woodhill

The Pariſh of Dunlop.

James Anderſon portioner Neitherhill
Andrew Robertſon farmer there
John Gemmil Templehouſe
James Steel in Merrymouth

David

David Cunningham of Ravenſlaw
Wil. Gemmil portioner of Waterſide
Wil. Parkhill quarrier in Gemshill
John Robertſon weaver in Blirts
John Gemmil portioner in Layhead
John Dunlop portioner of Aiket
James Dunlop ditto of Mains Aiket
James Craig ditto of Bordlandhills
John Barr ditto of Oldhall
Francis Logan wright in Neitherhouſe
John Brown day labourer in Hill
Patrick Gemmil of Templehouſe
John Dunlop of Low Borland
Robert Neilſon of High Borland
James Anderſon ſchool-maſter
James Muir ſhoemaker Strathmoor
Thomas King miler in Hapland miln
John Howie in Kirktoun

The Pariſh of Kilwinning.

Alexr. Montgomery por. Auchintiber
Robert Kerr ditto there
James Anderſon ditto there
John Becket ditto in Megs Walls
James Roberſon there
David Ramſay farmer in Red Walls
Robert Love ditto in Auchinmade
James Howie ſhoemaker Dykenock
Hugh Shedden in high Fergusonhill
Willlam Tweed farmer there

The Pariſh of Dalry.

Wil Boyd wright at Bankhead of Blair
Andrew Boyd farmer there
Robert Boyd farmer there
Jannet Dickie ſervant there
William Orr younger in Jamieſton
William Aitken ſervant there

The Pariſh of Beith.

John Muir portioner in Lugtonridge
Alexr. Barr portioner of Burnhouſe
James Duncan ditto there
Robert M'Grigor workman there
Alexander Rutherford ditto there
David Wighton ditto there
James Arclie ſkinner there
Robert Craig portioner of Giffin
James King portioner in Lowgree
Matthew Gilmour portioner there
Thomas Stirling ſervant there
John Gilmour portioner of Brownhills
Thomas Wilſon weaver in Old miln
John Muir portioner of Gatehead
Robert Biggart farmer in Drumboy
Robert Jamieſon ſilk weaver in Beith
Robert Smith ditto there

The Pariſh of Fenwick.

John Adam portioner in Skirniland
Alexr. Brown farmer in High Arneſs
Margaret Calderwood in Blackbyre
Jean Paterſon ſervant there
Ann Legat in townhead of Puruſkan
Thomas Pickend ſervant in Gree
Euphen Wilſon in Gildrum moor
Robert Ruſſel in Shaws
John Stevenſon in Dareclubboch
Thomas Burns weaver in Kiln
Alexr. Mitchel por. of Demholling
John Hamilton there.
James Howie farmer in Crigindunton
Peter Gemmil portioner of Rathmoor

Given in by Patrick Whyte tanner in Perth.

James Carrick tanner in Perth
Alexander Miller ditto there
James Davidſon ditto there
Andrew Iſles ditto there
Samuel Peddie ditto there
James Allan ditto there
Matthew Cook currier there

George Brown merchant Perth, 2 dozen
The Rev. Mr. Alex. Blyth miniſter of the goſpel Kinclaven
Thomas Gregory in Perth
Alex. Galloway there
Lauchlin M'Intoſh there
Andrew Stuart there
Chareles Millar there
David Finnie tqere
Alexander Smith there
Alexander Killar there
John Alexander there
Thomas Paterſon there
Peter Blair there
Wil. Chalmers ſchoolmaſter there
John Fyfe there
Alexr. Stuart there
John Cunningham there

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